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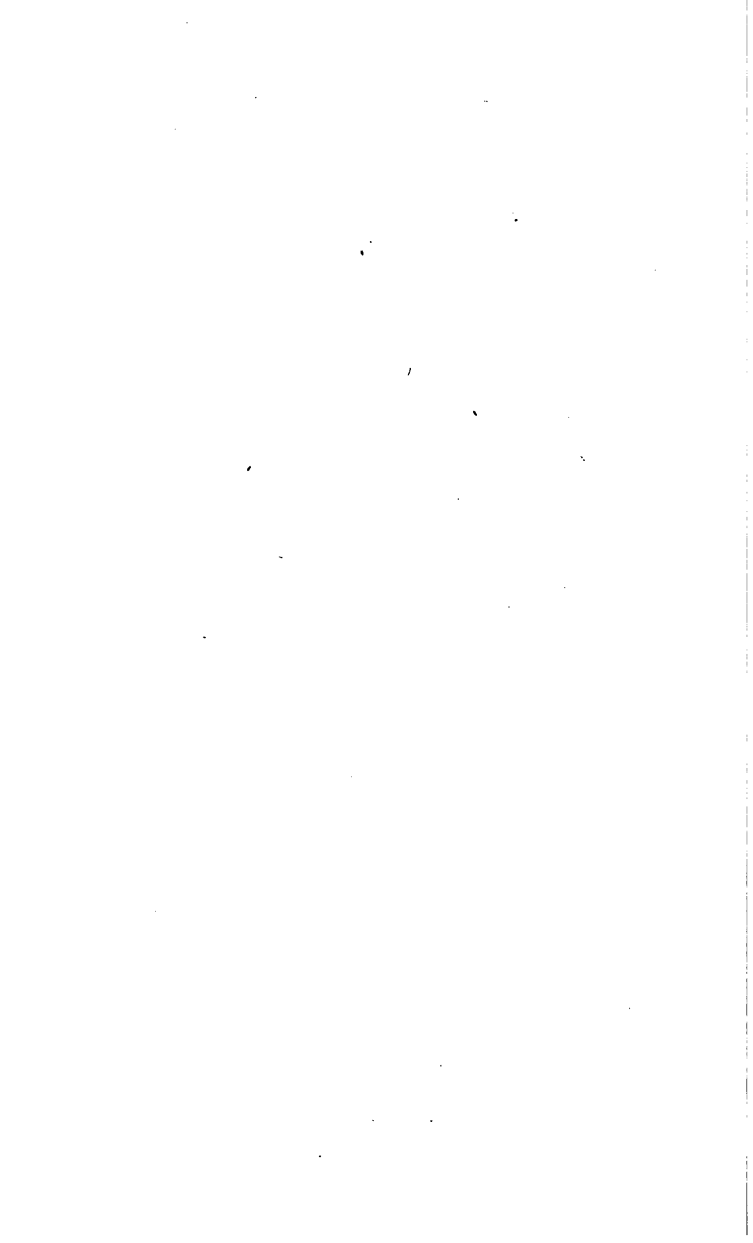


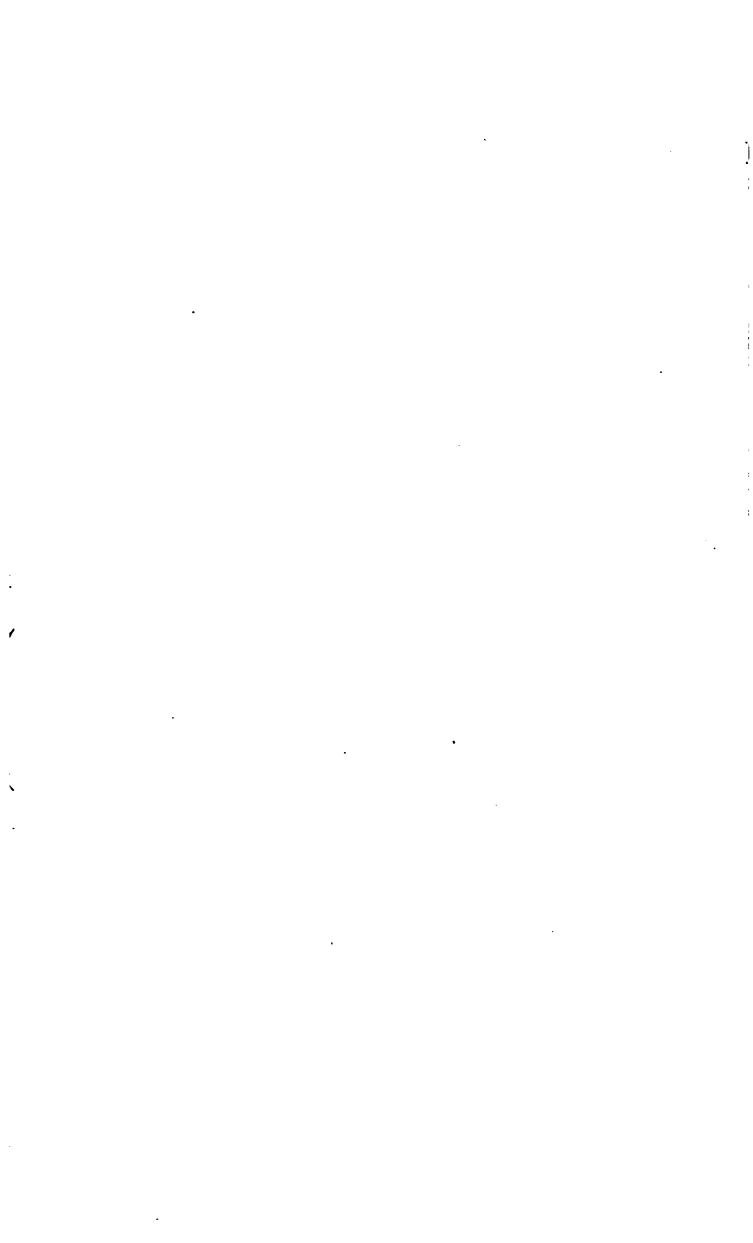
FROM THE BEQUEST OF

Mary Osgood

OF MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS







THE
HOME-LIFE OF ENGLISH LADIES
IN THE XVII. CENTURY.



BY THE AUTHOR OF "MAGDALEN STAFFORD."

———" They shine
With rays of love divine,
Through darkest nooks of this dull earth,
Pouring, in showery times, their glow of quiet mirth."

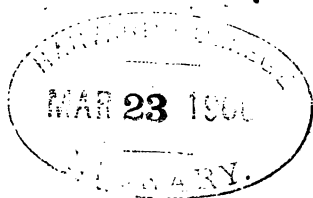
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INTRODUCTION.

IN this little volume an attempt has been made to draw, from materials already well-known, a picture of the ordinary interests and pursuits of English Ladies of a past century. Whatever may have been related of them, it is felt that immeasurably more remains to be told. For, though it may be questioned whether "the world knows nothing of its greatest men," it is certain that it knows, and can know, next to nothing of its noblest women. The best and safest life for woman, in almost all cases, is that which attracts to itself least observation. Her highest achievements consist in the performance of the lowliest duties, and her costliest sacrifices are offered out of the "unseen treasure of the heart." The will resigned in silence, glad hopes meekly forsaken, the tear restrained, the cry of anguish repressed, patient perseverance in distasteful duty, cheerful endurance of inevitable cares,—these are offerings to be weighed only in the balance of the sanctuary, and victories that are rarely crowned in this world's capitol. Lives, of which these are the

triumphs, and this the praise, are better witnessed than written, fitter to meditate upon than to describe.

But, whilst so little of the inner life can shine through the veil imposed by modesty and self-renunciation, now and then it happens that love of kindred, gratitude of friends, or even the evil fashion of the day, prodigal of panegyric, has preserved to us some few memorials of those who afforded a bright example to the age in which they lived. In such records the seventeenth century especially abounded; and from them the following selection has been made. Want of novelty in the subject, and absence of skill in its treatment, will not, it is hoped, obscure the names of those whose greatest work was carried on in their own hearts, and whose fame rose highest in their own homes.





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HOME-LIFE OF ENGLISH LADIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

THE EVELYN FAMILY AND THEIR FRIENDS.

Mrs. Evelyn's character—Her father, ambassador at Paris—Mr. Evelyn—His pursuits and travels—His marriage—Pecuniary difficulties of royalists at Paris—Portraits of Mrs. Evelyn—Lady Morton's escape with her royal pupil to France—Waller's ode to her—Mrs. Evelyn, sponsor to the poet's child—Mrs. Lane at Paris—Mr. Evelyn's return to England—Followed by his wife and her mother.

THE family circle to whom the first place in this volume has been allotted was composed, for the most part, of persons whose characters rose scarcely above mediocrity, and the current of whose life was unusually calm and unruffled. But from these circumstances the virtues practised, and the trials endured by them, come home to the daily experience of ordinary mortals. In every condition of society there must be some content to stand and wait. This passive part, however, though so necessary to be ac-

quiesced in, is not always the easiest, nor certainly the most attractive to those upon whom it is imposed. Such a part it was that Mrs. Evelyn appears to have perfectly fulfilled. Occasional references to her in her husband's diary, and a selection from her correspondence published with his, form the scanty materials from which our acquaintance with her is derived. Amongst her contemporaries there are many names more noteworthy than hers. She was not called to the performance of deeds of heroism; she was rather accomplished than learned; she was not remarkable for shining talent or exalted devotion. Yet her amiable disposition, good sense, and cultivated understanding, united with a sincere and simple piety, rendered her, in the words of one who knew her well, "the best daughter and wife, the most tender mother, a desirable neighbour and friend in all parts of her life."

Her childhood passed happily in the brightest capital in Europe, where her father, Sir Richard Browne, resided as English Ambassador; and to it she always looked back with grateful attachment. Here she was tended with all the care a gentle fate could assign to the only child of good, tender, and pious parents, and here it was that she was early seen and admired by the excellent and accomplished Mr. Evelyn; himself described as "one of the best and most dignified specimens of the old English country gentleman." Unshaken in his fidelity to a falling cause, when that cause became again triumphant he never condescended to bow

the knee to wickedness in high places. Indeed, it may be presumed that his loyalty must at last have partaken pretty much of the character of Horace Walpole's patriotism, who, when the patriots of his day were boring the *dilettante* statesman with, "Sure, Mr. Walpole, you love your country!" replied, that he believed he should love his country very well, if it were not for his countrymen. So it may be suspected that Evelyn would have supported the Royal cause with still more ardour than he did, had it not been for some royalists.

His tastes led him to a life of elegant employment and studious calm. Although he trailed a pike at Gennep, and joined the King's army at Brentford, yet on the day on which was fought "the signal battle of Edge Hill," after having seen Portsmouth delivered up to Sir William Waller, he was able to make a careful archæological survey of the city of Winchester, calmly noting its castle, church, school, and King Arthur's Round Table. Thus devoted to the pursuits of peace, it is no wonder that he shortly afterwards quitted a land divided by civil warfare. After exhausting the sights of Paris, he sailed to Genoa, inhaled the perfumed breath of the South, lost himself in the sunny mazes of Italian gardens, gazed with curious eye on the treasures of Florentine galleries, wandered through princely palaces, heard the Pope say mass at Rome on Christmas Day, climbed Vesuvius, and glided through the voiceless streets of Venice. Then, having declined the honour of a degree offered to him by the University

of Padua, and passed, with exceeding pleasure, through "the Paradise of Lombardy," he set his face homewards, returning by Geneva to Paris. Farther, for awhile, he did not proceed; and there, the only time in his whole life, as he tells us, lived "most idly."

We all know the indigenous growth of such a soil—love, in idleness, of necessity, sprang up. It was no idle passion, however, with which the daughter of Sir Richard Browne inspired him, though he was at this time seven-and-twenty; and she, the age of "one of Shakspeare's women," not yet fourteen.

Early in the year we find him changing his lodgings from the Place de M. de Metz, near the Abbey of St. Germain, to one in the Rue Columbier, doubtless to bring him nearer to "Rue Farrene," where the English Ambassador resided, and of which the pleasant situation lingered long in the memory of the ambassador's daughter. Nay, as Spring advanced, he began learning the lute, though to small perfection; a symptom which we take to be something like Benedict's "brushing his hat o' mornings." Later, his valet, Herbert, robbing him of clothes and plate to the value of three-score pounds, his effects were recovered for him by the good offices of Sir Richard Browne; for whose lady and family, when mentioning the circumstance, he acknowledges he had contracted a great friendship; having particularly set his affections on their daughter. His suit found favour with the ambassador and his lady; and in her declining days their child recorded her gra-

titude to those who had placed her in such worthy hands. Accordingly, on Corpus Christi Day, 1647, when the houses were hung with tapestry, and the streets strewn with flowers, amidst all the glitter and gaiety of a Paris *fête*, the marriage vows were taken in the Chapel of the Embassy, before Dr. Earle, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. Three months after this Evelyn quitted Paris for England, leaving his wife, "still very young, under the care of an excellent lady, and prudent mother."

Young she certainly was; her studies, it may be, somewhat incomplete, and her habits unfixed. But circumstances, after all, are our great instructors, and the brief spring-tide of her youth had been passed amid such as would not fail to impress a thoughtful nature with a serious view of life and its responsibilities. Her eyes had early been accustomed to look on scenes of suffering solaced by benevolence, and of trial sustained with fortitude. Her mother's house was an asylum for her exiled countrymen, as well as an hospital for the sick and needy. For many years of their residence in Paris they were subjected to the direst want of money, and precious lessons are those that are taught in the school of poverty. In a letter of Sir Richard Browne's to Lord Digby, dated 1644, he declares that, unless he is supplied with money, inevitable ruin must befall him. He had not, he says, wherewithal to provide himself, out of mourning, a new coat and liveries; and he appealed to all the world whether he had not for the last three years main-

tained his Majesty's honour beyond what could be expected in those distracted times, his estates in Kent and Essex yielding little or nothing. How familiar, indeed, the exiles were with the vulgar cares of life is rather amusingly evidenced by a passage in Hyde's correspondence with the ambassador, where, interpolated between two grave and important passages relating to public business, occurs the following paragraph:—"I know not what to say to the complaint of your servant, because you will not give me leave to take notice of it to the parties who are most concerned; but I believe there may be some error or malice in the report, because I am told by a very true friend of yours, that it is the maid's own fault that she hath not her diet there, and that because she might not be trusted with the government of the kitchen, and the buying the meat (in which she was thought too lavish) she absolutely, with great indignation, refuses to take her diet, with which they say the lady is much troubled: but I tell you again, I have this only from a friend, and not any of the house. I doubt your maid is apt to be angry, and when she is, she may be as unreasonable, as such angry people use to be."

Mrs. Evelyn was still residing in her father's house when this refractory maid-servant furnished so grave a subject of remark to the future historian; and she had not long quitted it when Sir Richard's landlord threatened to seize on his goods, the rent having been for some time due, and he being without means of satisfying him. Charles himself was

at this time besieged by butchers, bakers, brewers, and other tradesmen. Hyde was often puzzled how to pay the postage of his state correspondence. Neither to the King, then, nor to his Chancellor of the Exchequer, could the ambassador apply for assistance, and he was at last obliged to Sir Richard Foster for helping him out of his difficulties.

But household cares would be lightly met in those times, in which the veil of conventionality was rudely torn aside from life. Delicate women learnt to endure hardship; the timorous cast aside their fears. They came forth to head the defence of a beleaguered castle, or to conduct in safety some precious and imperilled life through the threatening dangers of surrounding foes, as though these were the ordinary avocations of their condition; so calmly and with so little self-consciousness were their deeds of heroism accomplished. In such seasons of revolution, whether of thought or society, or of government, it is indeed "impossible to be young, and to be indifferent." And though some natures there are so obtuse, that, like Louis XVI, before they can be brought to comprehend their situation, they need have it shouted in their ears—*Sire! c'est une Révolution!* such was not, for the most part, the case with either the men, or the women, of the days of the Great Rebellion. Witness the carefully kept journals, personal narratives, memoirs, and autobiographies of that period. All seem to have felt that they were agonizing in a solemn arena before the stern eyes of impartial witnesses.

The portrait of Mrs. Evelyn by Nanteuil, taken in the year that followed her marriage, though scarcely supporting her reputation for beauty, is full of intelligence, and of a character so marked as hardly to be in accordance with her years. And this, too, in spite of the unintellectual style of *coiffure* in which she is represented, whose stiff curls, like those of a waxen baby, for all their seeming guilelessness, cheat us out of one half of the brow. Another portrait by Bourdon, a three-quarters length, into which a dog was introduced, was sent by Mrs. Evelyn to her husband in the course of the following year, and met with a series of strange adventures before it reached its destination. The ship in which it was being conveyed to England was attacked and robbed at sea by pirates, by whom the picture was sold to Count de la Strada, the governor of Dunkirk, who placed it with a collection of other beauties in his bedroom. Evelyn, being informed of this circumstance by some friends who had seen it there, sought out the Count, by whom the portrait was courteously restored to him, about three years after its loss, and after having sustained considerable damage from sundry scrubbings with soap and water.

The original of the portrait was in the meantime enduring her portion of risk and disquiet. Paris was strictly besieged by the Prince de Condé, and Sir Richard Browne and his family shared in all the discomfort and annoyance, if not the dangers, of the siege, and "the letter of consolation," written by

Evelyn to his wife at this time, must have been especially welcome. This was in February, 1649. They did not meet again until the following August, after a separation of a year and a-half.

Evelyn's presence in England was necessary for the sake of his own affairs, and those of his father-in-law, at whose house, Sayes Court, he spent much of his time, having a lodging and some books there. Mighty changes had been accomplished during the period of his sojourn there. Charles's head had fallen by the hand of his subjects, and "unkingship was proclaimed in England."

The faithful few who still acknowledged a King of England now sought him at St. Germain, whither Evelyn, soon after his return to Paris, proceeded, to kiss his Majesty's hand, being conveyed there in my Lord Wilmot's coach, their party including Mrs. Barlow, the mother of the Duke of Monmouth. It was in better company than that of the "brown, beautiful, bold, but insipid creature," whom in those few words he has so graphically described, that his next visit to the English court was paid. For his wife and cousin accompanied him to kiss the Queen Mother's hand, and they dined there with my Lord Keeper and Lord Hatton.

At the Louvre in the following month they visited one of the heroines, whose great qualities the misfortunes of the times had called into action. Lady Morton now resided there, the widow of Robert, Earl of Morton, and governess to the Princess Henrietta, who, a fortnight after her birth, had been

committed to her care by her ill-fated mother, when compelled to flee from Exeter by the approach of the Earl of Essex. Lady Morton remained in the threatened city, until its relief by the royal army ; when she had the joy of laying the infant for the first time, and, as it proved, the last, in the father's arms ; for Charles never again saw the child, who was baptized, according to his desire, by the name of Henrietta Anne.

From Exeter Lady Morton removed with the princess to Oatlands ; but in the course of the following year, she was ordered by the Parliament to resign her charge to the Countess of Northumberland, with whom the other royal children were placed. On this she resolved to escape into France where Henrietta Maria now resided, and to restore the princess to her mother, by whom she had been first consigned to her, and to whom alone she could feel justified in resigning her.

From Oatlands to Dover her journey was accomplished on foot ; and as the utmost secrecy was requisite to ensure the success of her plan, a disguise was of necessity adopted. Lady Morton accordingly assumed the dress of a poor Frenchwoman ; but even this homely garb could not conceal her grace and loveliness ;

“ As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ancles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.”

The beauty which poverty and rags could not veil,

she was obliged to subject to an eclipse ; and adjusting an artificial hump on her shoulder, she dressed her little princess as a beggar-boy, and thus disfigured and disguised escaped without detection ; and

———" through the guards, the river, and the sea,
Faith, Beauty, Wit, and Courage made their way."

The fair company thus revealed to the poet's eye, to the common wayfarer appeared only in the guise of a deformed French beggar-woman, with her little boy Pierre, whom she carried on her back as she walked bravely along to Dover ; the child, much to her alarm, though scarcely less to her amusement, indignantly repudiating the character she was compelled to assume, and declaring to all they met that she was a Princess, and not Pierre, the beggar-boy.

Happily her royal highness's explanations were not very intelligible, and her pronunciation of princess so closely resembled the name bestowed on her by her guardian (who had indeed selected it for that reason), that they were allowed to pursue their way unmolested, until, arrived in France, their dangers were over, and the Princess resumed her rank, and Lady Morton her beauty. Proceeding to Paris, the one was received into the rapturous embraces of her mother, the other found herself the object of praise and admiration for her noble daring and devoted fidelity. Sir Thomas Berkeley sought her hand, and it is said never forgave Clarendon, (who had a great friendship for her, and by whose advice

she acted,) for her rejection of his suit. Waller sung her praises in an ode presented by him to the Queen at the Louvre, on New Year's Day, 1647, in which he thus addressed her :—

“ But thus to style you fair, your sex's praise,
Gives you but myrtle who may challenge bays :
From armèd foes to bring a royal prize
Shows your brave heart victorious as your eyes.
If Judith, marching with the general's head,
Can give us passion when her story's read,
What may the living do, which brought away
Though a less bloody, yet a nobler prey—
Who from our flaming Troy, with a bold hand,
Snatch'd her fair charge, the princess, like a brand ?—
A brand preserved to warm some prince's heart,
And make whole kingdoms take her brother's part.”

Waller, who, having “ praised some whom he would have been afraid to marry,” was now “ married to one whom he would have been ashamed to praise,” lived on terms of great intimacy with the Evelyns; and to one of his children Mrs. Evelyn stood sponsor. But her little goddaughter did not long survive, either to follow her example or to need her cares. She died in her infancy, and was brought from St. Germain, where her parents were residing, to Paris, that she might be buried with the religious rites of the Church of England.

Christenings in those days were expensive ceremonies to all concerned in them. Evelyn records how, when last in England, he stood godfather to a little niece, on whom he bestowed the same name as that borne by his wife, Mary, and presented to the child a piece of plate of the value of £18, with an

elaborate Latin inscription of his own composition engraved on it. Again in Paris, he relates how Sir Hugh Rilie, being too poor to provide sponsors for his child, he and other friends drew lots who should offer themselves for that office. We may remember, too, how the thrifty Pepys, putting the spoons in his pocket that he designed as a present for his godchild, brought them home again, well pleased at having escaped the compliment, and the expense it entailed, of being requested to name the child at the font.

In the summer of 1650, Evelyn again crossed to England, but returned to France after a short absence. During this interval the battle of Worcester was fought, and Charles, after wandering a fugitive and an outcast in the land over which he had been born to rule, escaped to France; and thither, towards the close of the year, he was followed by the lady to whose loyal devotion he owed his safety.

Mrs. Evelyn seems at once to have numbered her amongst her friends, since almost immediately on her arrival in Paris, Mrs. Lane's visit to her is recorded. From her own lips she must have heard the thrilling narrative of those adventures which have been so often related that it is not allowable to do more than briefly allude to them here.

Mrs. Lane must have told her friend of the strange guest who arrived at the old hall in Staffordshire late one autumn night; and how her brother and Lord Wilmot, who brought him there, whispered to her that this pale dark youth, travel-

worn and weary, was no other than the King, fled thither from Worcester, and that she must aid him in escaping from the pursuers that were on his track. Charles, therefore, took the place of a servant who was to attend Mrs. Lane into Somersetshire, where she was 'going on a visit to some friends ; but ere their journey began, his awkwardness in performing his part attracted the attention of her mother, and well nigh betrayed their plan. That was a light peril, compared with what awaited them in their darksome ride. Once they passed unmolested through a body of Round-head soldiers. At the smith's forge, where they stopped when the horse lost a shoe, Charles heard himself reviled by a disloyal subject. At Bristol they lost their way, and were obliged to a chance passer-by for directing them into it again. When sheltered for a night beneath a friendly roof, the suspicions of the domestics were aroused by the delicacy of the King's hands, and his ignorance of menial offices, which accorded so ill with the character he was compelled to assume. Even at Abbotsleigh, which was their place of destination, he was surrounded by danger. One of his own chaplains resided in the family ; the butler had once held a post in the royal household. The energy and unshaken resolution of Mrs. Lane, however, surmounted all difficulties. When it was necessary to seek a new asylum, she devised a scheme by which she might again accompany the King, until she had committed him into the hands of other friends, by

whom he was eventually conveyed out of England. For Mrs. Lane herself her native land was no longer a place of safety, and accordingly she and her brother followed the royal exile to France.

She was received with great distinction on her arrival in Paris. The Royal Family all went to meet her, and his Majesty "taking her by the hand, saluted her with this obliging term: 'Welcome, my life!'"

The events that drove Mrs. Lane from England seem to have determined Evelyn's return. The battle of Worcester had settled the government of the country, and however displeasing such a settlement might be to him, yet, as there seemed but little cause to hope for a change for the better, and as his own affairs, and still more those of his father-in-law, were suffering from want of supervision, he quitted Paris towards the close of January, 1652, and in the early spring took up his residence at Sayes Court, from whence, in the course of the summer, he proceeded to Rye to meet his wife. She and her mother were three days crossing over from the Continent, having encountered some peril on the way, from the presence of the Dutch fleet in the channel; through which, however, they passed in safety. And one long afternoon, when Evelyn, having already been detained a week in Rye, was beguiling the time with a game of bowls on the green, the vessel was discovered approaching the harbour, where the weary travellers landed at eight o'clock at night, "to my no small joy," adds the Diarist.



II.

Mrs. Evelyn a stranger in her native land—Different state of society in France and England—Visits to Tunbridge Wells and Penshurst—Lady Dorothy Sidney—Her letters in early life to her father, Lord Leicester—Addressed by Waller as Sacharissa—Her first marriage with Earl of Sunderland, then Lord Spencer—His departure from Althorp to the King's army—His correspondence with his wife, and death at the Battle of Newbury—Her widowhood—Death of her sisters—Second marriage at period of Mrs. Evelyn's visit.

THOUGH returning to her native land, Mrs. Evelyn came to it as a stranger. She had quitted it twelve years before, when she was but five years old. Her tastes had been acquired, and her manners formed amongst a foreign people, of more polished habits than those of which her own countrymen could at that time boast. In his "Character of England," written, it would appear, soon after his return from abroad, Evelyn contrasts, in a style most unflattering to his compatriots, the usages of society in France and England. In this paper, writing under the character of a Frenchman, he describes his carriage pursued, on his journey, and even in London, by a crowd of children and apprentices, pelting

it with stones, and hooting at the travellers. Was such the usage accorded to the new coach, made after a pattern brought from Paris, which Mr. Evelyn had ordered against his wife's arrival? And was it thus they were annoyed as they quitted Rye, for "the very sweet place, private and refreshing," which he had taken at Tunbridge Wells? What an impression of her country must the frightened occupant of that coach have received! And we may imagine how gravely Mr. Evelyn dilated on the ill-behaviour of the mob, as "the natural effects of parity, popular libertinism, and insular manners."

It was, indeed, into a new world that Mrs. Evelyn was introduced. The country was only just reviving from the horrors of a civil war. The Court banished, the gentry impoverished, society disorganized—the very circumstances that gave force to the character destroyed the graces of social life.

At a country house where Evelyn was visiting, and where he, according to the French custom, had joined the ladies early after dinner, the withdrawing-room was suddenly invaded by one of the company whom he had quitted. With inflamed countenance, and disordered apparel, he rushed into the room, snatched up a sword that lay in the window, and with it prepared to defend himself against three or four men who pursued him, and who, in the presence of the ladies, proceeded thus to settle some dispute. In the affray which ensued the spurs of one of the party caught in the carpet, and drew down a mirror, and two noble pieces of porcelain, to their utter

destruction ; whilst the women with difficulty made their escape from this stormy scene.

Such unseemly behaviour had, of course, its due influence on the female society of the day. Coarse in speech, gaudy in attire, and masculine in gait—such is the picture left us of the fashionable ladies of the Commonwealth. At balls the dancing-master was their only partner ; whilst to treat a lady at a tavern was considered a delicate attention on the part of an admirer. There were then two widely differing aspects of society. The world where fashion and the world where virtue reigned had then, and for long years subsequently, but little in common. It was in quiet country homes, in grave domestic circles, that refinement of conduct was taught by purity of heart, and gentleness of demeanour attained by the practice of Christian charity.

That a favourable example of English life might not be wanting to Mrs. Evelyn, on quitting Tunbridge Wells, she with her husband paid a visit to Penshurst. Here they were present at the second nuptials of the Countess of Sunderland, who in her youth inspired one of the most brilliant and accomplished men of the day with a passion, which, though of world-wide fame, from her met no return. Celebrated though she was as Sacharissa, of Lady Dorothy Sidney's domestic story there is but little known. She was the eldest daughter of the Earl of Leicester, and, it seems, the object of her parents' especial tenderness and care. She also early

enjoyed the instruction of Dr. Hammond ; as her father, charmed with his eloquence, had presented him to the living of Penshurst ; and there he particularly devoted himself to the instruction of the young. That in her own home she beheld a bright example of domestic happiness may be gathered, not only from the touching narrative of Lady Leicester's death-bed in the Sidney Papers, but yet more from her impassioned avowal of affection, written to her husband after eighteen years of married life. " If," she says, " it be love to think on you, sleeping and waking ; to discourse of nothing with pleasure but what concerns you ; to wish myself every hour with you ; and to pray for you with as much devotion as for my own soul ; then certainly it may be said I am in love."

In after years many a shadow fell upon Lord Leicester's hearth. Death was busy amongst those dearest to him. Constancy to principle held his noblest son in exile. Discord crept in amongst those once closely united ; whilst heaviness and bereavement darkened the lot of her who in her girlish days gave artless expression to her feelings in the following letter addressed to her father :—

" MY LORD,

HAD not my intentions been diverted by the trouble of a distemper which a great cold produced, and, since that, by the expectation of Rochelle's coming hither, I would not have been thus slow in presenting your Lordship with my humble thanks for the many fine things you have bestowed on me. And, though they

will be my greatest ornaments, which is of much consideration by persons no wiser than I am, they could not give me any contentment, but as I understand they are expressions of your Lordship's favour; a blessing that above all others in this world I do with much passion desire; and my ambition is, that whatsoever your Lordship doth propound to be in the perfectest good child upon the earth, you may find accomplished in me, that will ever be your Lordship's most affectionate, most humble, and most obedient

"D. SIDNEY."

Thus loving and thus beloved, it was, we may believe, in the happy influences of her home, rather than in "greatness, state, and pride," that Lady Dorothy found a safeguard against the perilous adulation of one who owed the pardon of the gravest faults of conduct to the irresistible fascination of his manner. Waller, in the full flush of fame, success, and self-confidence, might with mortification and surprise complain of—

"Haughty Sacharissa's scorn."

But impartial judges will approve rather than condemn the true heart that would not be bartered for flattering phrases, rejecting indignantly the base coin of false sentiment thus proffered. She was still in extreme youth when he, owning all the advantages that grace, and wit, and talent could bestow, paid homage to her. Yet, with all his charms—a practised courtier, a finished orator, a poet of surpassing sweetness—he failed to dazzle the eye, still less could he win the heart of the fair daughter of the Earl of Leicester. His most elaborate metaphors,

his most polished compliments, his most mellifluous strains, fell upon an ear that was indifferent, even when it was not inattentive. Celia might relent, Amoret be propitiated, Sacharissa was inexorable—

“ All, but the nymph that should redress his wrong,
Attend his passion, and approve his song.”

And, though gazing on her soft smiling features, traced by the pencil of Vandyke, he was beguiled for a moment into hope, it was but to be as speedily reminded that it was to the skill of the artist, and not to the bending of her purpose, that he owed the flattering delusion :—

“ Fool! that forgets, her stubborn look
This softness from thy finger took.”

As, however, Waller himself has told us that poets succeed better in fiction than in truth, it may be inferred that in the far-fetched compliments he lavished on the lady he thought more of the advancement of his own fame than of the celebration of her charms. Doubtless, therefore, he found consolation in twining his brows with the bays which his “ immortal strain” had won, though it failed to secure him the heart of Sacharissa. “ On too sublime a tree” blushed the fair fruit to which the courtly poet stretched a venturous hand.

“ Rich orient pearls, bright stones that ne’er decay,
Or polished lines, which longer last than they—”

all were alike contemned. And, after a vain appeal to Lord Leicester to decide his fate, he was fain to withdraw his unwelcome suit, and asked for pardon “ that he dared admire.”

Waller was not alone in his woes. They were shared by a band of disappointed wooers. Amongst others the heir of the house of Bedford sought and was denied the hand of Lady Dorothy. She was reserved for one worthy—

“ To hold the costliest love in fee.”

This was the young Lord Spencer, to whom she was united in 1639. “ A true nobleman, who was virtuous because it became him, as well as because it was enjoined.” Scorning evil, out of love and veneration for goodness, his was that innate purity of soul, the very condition of whose existence it is to repel with vigour and with righteous wrath all approach of contamination.

Lord Spencer was but nineteen at the time of his marriage with Lady Dorothy, who was of the same age as himself. The three succeeding years they spent with her father in Paris, where he resided as ambassador, and they returned with him to England, on the conclusion of his mission, in the autumn of 1641.

But, however serene the promise of their early married life, it was speedily to be overcast by those dark clouds, that, long gathering on the horizon, were now overspreading the whole heavens, bearing ruin and devastation on their wings. Lord Spencer, immediately on his return to England, took his seat in the House of Lords; and here his part was soon determined. Keenly sensible as he was of the defects of the government, his honour bound him to

the King, and devoted him to his cause. He conveyed his family to Althorp, after placing his estates in the hands of trustees for the use of his wife and children.* Then "consecrating his house as a temple, he ordered his followers to wrestle with God in prayer, while he wrestled with the enemy in fight." And in August 1642 he bade farewell to his home, which he was never again to bless with his presence. But thither his thoughts fled away to be at rest from the discordant tumult of the camp, and the woeful spectacles of the battle-field. There, too, his heart sought repose from the yet more painful strife of tongues, and jarring of contending interests, that pervaded the counsels and weakened the hands of his unhappy sovereign. Thus he wrote to his wife during the siege of Gloucester in the course of the following year, previously to which he had been created Earl of Sunderland.

"MY DEAREST HEART,

JUST as I was going out of the trenches on Wednesday I received your letter of the 20th of this instant, which gave me so much satisfaction that it put all the inconveniences of this siege out of my thoughts. At that instant, if I had followed my own inclinations, I had returned an answer to yours; writing to you, and hearing from you being the most pleasant entertainment I am capable of receiving in any place, but especially now; but when I am in the trenches, (which place is seldom without my company,) I am more solitary than

* The signatures attached to the document are those of Algernon Sidney and Dr. Hammond.

ever I was in my life; this country being very full of private cottages, in one of which I am quartered, where my Lord Falkland did me the honour to sup.

* * * Many of the soldiers are confident that we shall have the town within this four days, which I extremely long for; not that I am weary of this siege, for really, though we suffer many inconveniences, yet I am not ill-pleased with this variety, so directly opposite as the being in the trenches with so much good company, together with the noise and *tintamarre* of guns and drums, with the horrid spectacles, and hideous cries of dead and hurt men is, to the solitariness of my quarter, together with all the marks of peace, which often brings into my thoughts, notwithstanding your mother's opinion of me, how infinitely more happy I should esteem myself quietly to enjoy your company at Althorp than to be troubled with the noises, and engaged in the factions of the court, which I shall ever endeavour to avoid." (Here, it may be, touching on dangerous ground, the letter is continued for many lines in cipher. Further he proceeds):—

"When we were at Bristol Sir William was there, for which I envy him and all others that can go to their own houses; but I hope ere long you will let me have your company and Popet's, the thought of which is to me most pleasant and passionately desired by yours,

"SUNDERLAND."

From the concluding sentence of this letter, and from a passage in another written from Oxford, it would appear that Lady Sunderland was preparing to join her husband. Cheered by this hope, she may have been indulging in anticipations of the meeting, the gladness of which should make amends for the pain of the previous parting; whilst beside

her, her little daughter prepared a mimic letter, to which her father should send a playful reply, as when before he wrote:—"Pray bless Popet for me, and tell her I would have writ to her, but that, upon mature deliberation, I found it uncivil to return an answer to a lady in another character than her own, which I have not yet learned enough to do."

But whilst the child prattled, and the mother mused, he on whom so many hopes attended, on whom so many thoughts were centred, lay lifeless on the field of Newbury, struck down by a cannon ball, when, "with a kind of contempt of the enemy, and with wonderful boldness," the King's horse, in which Lord Sunderland served as a volunteer, charged the opposing ranks with unavailing valour. Thus he fell in the prime of youth, and with him were laid low the hopes and happiness of her, the bright dawn of whose youth had presaged so fair a day. For many months Lady Sunderland lay dangerously ill. Her mother, who was with her in the hour of her bereavement, tended her with anxious care. A letter, addressed to her by her father at this time, binds up the wounds of the poor stricken heart with a skill and a tenderness so rarely found in letters of consolation, that it is on this account inserted.—"Your reason will assure you," he wrote, "that, besides the vanity of bemoaning that which hath no remedy, you offend him whom you loved, if you hurt that person whom he loved. Remember how apprehensive he was of your dangers, and how sorry for anything that troubled you. Imagine

how he sees that you afflict and hurt yourself. You will then believe that, though he looks upon it without any perturbation, for that cannot be admitted by the blessed condition wherein he is, yet he may censure you, and think you forgetful of the friendship that was between you, if you pursue not his desires in being careful of yourself, who was so dear unto him. But he sees you not. He knows not what you do. Well, what then ! Would you do anything that would displease him if he knew it, because he is where he doth not know it ! I am sure that was never in your thoughts ; for the rule of your actions was, and must be, virtue and affection to your husband ; not the consideration of his ignorance or knowledge of what you do : that is but an accident ; neither do I think that his presence was at any time more than a circumstance not at all necessary to your abstaining from those things that might displease him."

After a while Lady Sunderland retired to her husband's estate of Brington in Northamptonshire ; endeared to her from its having become his burial-place ; as eventually it was her own. Here, for many years, she resided with her children ; whilst to the suffering loyalists " her house was a sanctuary, her interest a protection, her estate a maintenance, and the livings in her gift a preferment." But as time advanced the burden of housekeeping, increased, it may be, unduly by her liberality, pressed too heavily on her, and she returned to her early home. She remained there until the year 1650,

when she again removed from Penshurst to Althorp. Only a few days afterwards her younger sister, Elizabeth, died after a lingering illness, "which," says her father, "she bore to the last with admirable patience and cheerfulness, and had such a divine assurance of her future happiness, that she left the world with more joy than if she had gone to be married to the greatest prince on the earth. Not half an hour before her death," he continues, "she took her leave of me, smiling; and when I told her, 'Betty, I have prayed for you, I desire you to pray for me,' she, holding me by the hand, said, 'I do pray for you heartily, and God be with you!' which were the last words I heard her say. She had to the last the most angelical countenance and beauty, and the most heavenly disposition and temper of mind, that I think hath been seen in so young a creature, being not eighteen years old."

The bereavement, thus touchingly recorded by the father, was twelve months afterwards succeeded by the loss of another daughter, Frances Sidney. She died at the age of twenty, and is described by Lord Leicester as a very good, modest, discreet, and sweet-natured creature, "and I doubt not," he adds, "she is now with her Saviour and ours in Paradise."

To these seasons of mourning a brighter gleam succeeded in the family annals. For Evelyn, in the summer of 1652, going with his wife to Penshurst, found the house full of company, on the marriage of his old fellow-collegian, Mr. Robert Smythe, with Lord Sunderland's widow.

But how changed was she from the dazzling young beauty on whom the whole quiver of the modish Cupid had once been spent in vain! The morning bloom had faded from her cheek, painted by nature's hand, as the poet swore. The curls, where lurked so many insidious snares, had been concealed beneath a widow's coif. The step, at whose approach the Penshurst groves had bowed their leafy heads in homage, had been slackened by care, and overtaken by sorrow. Yet something of that "angel-like disguise," we may believe, still invested her presence, some recollection of her bright and worshipped youth still lingered in her memory.

Had she any questions to put to Mrs. Evelyn about that friend of her husband, who had been his fellow-traveller in Italy, and to whose child she had stood sponsor at St. Germain? For even in old age she could not forget that she had once inspired as Sacharissa. Alas! for the constancy of poets, and the fleeting reign of beauty. We know how Waller avenged himself in after years. Meeting again the idol of his earlier days, she still lofty in spirit, but forgetting how time had touched her brow, and perhaps thinking that she was condescending in making the inquiry, asked, "When Mr. Waller would again write verses upon her?" It was an opportunity not to be lost of avenging a long-resented slight. "When you are as young, Madam, and as handsome as you were then," was his clever and cutting rejoinder. The playful malediction pronounced on her by him at the time

of her first marriage, in a letter addressed to her younger sister, Lady Lucy, had in part been fulfilled. She had arrived at "that great curse, so much declined by fair ladies—old age!" She had lived "to be very old, and yet seemed young;" was "told so by her glass, and had no aches to inform her of the truth."

But if the poet's words breathed disdain, it is amusing to mark the placid indifference with which "old Waller" is alluded to in Lady Sunderland's letters to Lord Halifax, who had married her eldest daughter.

For Sacharissa's fame it would have been as well if these letters had not been published; as they do not present us with an attractive portrait of her old age. Written as they were for the purpose of conveying political intelligence to her son-in-law, during his absence from town, we would not quarrel with them for failing in the graces of composition, or even for the absence of any very exalted sentiments. But, though furnishing some curious specimens of the Court gossip of the day, they are to the modern reader almost wholly devoid of interest, nay, verge upon the deadly sin of dulness; and, closing the volume, we are reluctantly compelled to confess, that there was some truth in the prediction of her poet-lover:—

"Her beauty, too, had perished and her fame,
Had not the muse redeemed them from the flame."



III.

Sayes Court—Its gardens—The trees and shrubs—Its visitors—Domestic habits—Instances of care of servants—Attention to household affairs, and to religious instruction of domestics—Mrs. Evelyn's qualifications for society—Its state in England—Mr. Evelyn's tour with his family—Discovery of the Evelyn Papers—Mrs. Evelyn's character from her letters—Her early married life—Letter from Jeremy Taylor—Divine service at Sayes Court.

AMIDST broad, flat meadows, stretching towards the banks of the Thames, and shadowed by a few old hollow elms, and a standard holly or two, stood the Manor-house of West Greenwich or Deptford. Sayes Court was so called after the family into whose hands it had passed from those of the Knight on whom it had been bestowed by William the Conqueror. Geoffrey de Say had, in the fervour of crusading zeal, presented it to the Knights Templars; but his descendants, after a while, resumed the gift. It had for many years been held under the crown by the family of Browne, in whose pasture the cattle, supplied from remoter provinces for the use of the king's household, were fed. The Manor-house had been built by the ancestors of Sir Richard Browne,

whose birth-place it was. This circumstance he earnestly urged as a plea on which he might be permitted to retain the property, when Charles, after having set up his standard at Nottingham, was preparing to mortgage, or sell the crown lands.

Never a large estate, it was during the Commonwealth greatly curtailed in its dimensions. The Parliament had left the present owner but sixty acres attached to the dwelling. This was a long, low house, two stories high, with mullioned windows, and pointed gables. Adjoining it was a small garden; the stables were attached to the house; and near was a barn, constructed entirely of beams of chestnut-wood. An old orchard lay on one side, bounded by one of the barn closes. The other meadow, (the whole of the pasture being thus divided,) lay between the barn and a field called Bradmarsh—a name ominously suggestive of river-damps. The situation was, however, remarkably warm and dry. The house was much out of repair, and its interior accommodations seem curiously insufficient for a person of Sir Richard Browne's position. In the survey of the manor, before its sale by the Parliament, they are thus described:—"The ground-floor consisted of one hall, one parlour, one kitchen, one buttery, one larder with a dairy-house, also one chamber and three cellars. In the second story, eight chambers, with four closets and three garrets." The Manor-house, garden, orchard, and courtyards contained together two acres, two roods, sixteen perches.

Such was the home to which Evelyn brought his wife, from Penshurst, in the month of July, 1652, having somewhat inured her, after her long residence on the continent, to the more sombre skies, and less facile manners of her native land. But that desolate old mansion, with its ragged borders and gnarled trees, was destined to become the resort of royalty itself; and its name is dear even in the present day to all who "in trim gardens take their pleasure." Sayes Court, descending to Mrs. Evelyn by inheritance, was during her father's lifetime given up to her husband. And he, excluded as much by his tastes as by his political principles from public employment, and shrinking from a career of fashionable trifling, followed the bent of his own happy inclinations in devoting himself to the improvement of his estate.

Under his skilful hands the garden became a "pleasaunce" such as a poet might dream of. Such a one it was, in situation at least, as that sweet scene where dwelt the "Gardener's Daughter"—

"Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it."

To its embellishment were added many of those quaint contrivances which were the fashion of the day, and especial objects of Evelyn's admiration. Labyrinths involved the visitor in puzzling mazes. A perspective lengthened a broad terrace walk. Statues glimmered amongst the laurels, and fountains glittered in the sun. The flower knots blazed

with many a choice treasure, the borders were gay with blossoms of homely growth ;—

“ And all the turf was rich in plots, that looked
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it.”

To the culture and care of their garden Mrs. Evelyn devoted much attention. “ Your Flora,” she was designated by one of her husband’s classic correspondents. But not for ornamental purposes only it claimed her attention. Damask roses, violets, gilly-flowers, and a thousand other sweets yielded their essences for perfumes, cordials, and conserves in the sacred precincts of the still-room ; whilst “ the plenty, riches, and variety of the sallet-garden” were held by her in high esteem. But the chief glory of the grounds consisted in the trees and choice shrubs planted there by Evelyn, and on which in the “ Sylva” he so lovingly dilates. Here were cedars from Libanus, and mulberries from Languedoc. The *arbor vitæ* mingled its sombre tints with those of the juniper and cypress, that surrounded the grass-plots with an impervious barrier. A plane-tree spread its broad shade on one hand, on the other the chestnut reared its pyramids of milky bloom. The dark, polished masses of the ilex caught and reflected back each blink of sunshine, whilst tall hedges of alaternus and phillyrea closed in the *parterre*. Orange-trees and myrtles perfumed the summer evenings with their balmy sighs ; the crimson-flushed pomegranate flourished in the open air ; and the jasmine led

its snowy-wreaths around the stone-work of the house: but stately beyond all was seen that "glorious holly-hedge, blushing with its clusters of natural coral." Even when these were wanting, an equivalent might be found in the transparent fruit of the cornelian cherry, or, better still, in a warm grove where a store of mountain-ash were springing, "of singular beauty," contrived not only to delight the eye, but to soothe the ear; for thither were multitudes of thrushes attracted by the scarlet berries that decked the boughs.

The house was enlarged, "elegantly set off with ornaments, and quaint mottoes at most turns." A study, laboratory, and chapel, besides servants' offices, were added. But the best reception-room, the fairest saloon, was without the walls, carpeted with green turf, and canopied with the blue vault of heaven. For the garden in those days was, as Sir Walter Scott observes, "often used as a sort of chapel of ease to the apartments within doors, and afforded opportunities for the society, after the early dinner of our ancestors, to enjoy the evening in the cool fragrance of walks and bowers. Hence the dispersed groups which Watteau and others set forth as perambulating the highly ornamented scenes, which those artists took pleasure in painting."

They are not, however, exactly Watteau-like figures that we imagine as animating the walks and terraces of the oval garden, which replaced the rude orchard that formerly stretched between the house and meadows. Beneath a tall cypress, shorn into

a pyramid, might be seen the noble form of the ejected rector of Uppingham—his calm brow unshadowed by the faintest cloud of gloom as he surveys the signs of affluence and enjoyment that surround him—serenely content under poverty and neglect. Holding in his hand, and gazing upon him with that loving veneration with which children acknowledge the presence of a saint, is a bright-faced boy, intelligent beyond his years: his gleaming eyes, his lip quivering with the eager answer that springs there so readily, the eloquent blood speaking in his cheek, all mark him as one not long destined for an inhabitant of this lower world. By gentle answer, or more subtle query, Dr. Jeremy Taylor draws on his young companion to high and holy themes; all the time, it may be, thinking sadly of a little child of his own—a boy who had lately made him very glad, but for whom he is now in heaviness. Or, shrinking like some delicate exotic from the breath of evening that blows fresh from the river, Robert Boyle may be found pacing beneath the holly-hedge with his host, where they converse together “on serious thoughts abstruse.” Waiting until their argument is concluded, Mr. Pepys looks round with much outward respect, but with some secret contempt, on the novelties and contrivances by which he is surrounded;—the aviary, where the old Marquis of Argyle took the turtle-doves for owls; or, the glass hives, in the sunny corner by the herb-bed, sent by Dr. Wilkins from Oxford. Or, we may imagine amongst such scenes the grave

brow of Lady Ranelagh, the Hebrew scholar and student of prophecy, contracting with incredulous wonder at the strange stories told her by a tall, graceful cavalier, looking like a Knight of King Arthur's Court, and talking like Baron Munchausen. But the truth of one of Sir Kenelm Digby's marvellous narratives (relating to a remarkable barnacle goose tree flourishing in the isle of Jersey) is calmly confirmed by Lady Fanshawe, who is on a visit to her relatives at Sayes Court. Then, resuming her conversation with Mrs. Evelyn, she continues her description of that fair garden of Sir Henry Fanshawe, that once bloomed near Ware; in which "he did so precisely examine the tinctures and seasons of his flowers, that in their settings, the inwardest of those that were to come up at the same time, should be always a little darker than the utmost, and so serve them for a kind of gentle shadow, like a piece not of Nature but of Art."

But apart from these, wandering amongst the flower-knots, now stooping to inhale the perfume of a tuberose, now pondering over the markings of a martagon lily, is Abraham Cowley, whose love for "the delicious toil," in which he himself so delighted, endeared him to Evelyn, whose neighbour he was. With pensive wistfulness he contemplates the scene before him, including in itself his utmost worldly desire—"a small house and a large garden." It may be the first idea is suggesting itself to his mind, of that charming Ode in which he has commemorated the felicity of his friends:—

“ Happy art thou, whom God does bless
With the full Choice of thine own Happiness ;
And happier yet, because thou’rt blest
With Prudence, how to choose the best :
In Books and Gardens thou hast plac’d aright
(Things which thou well dost understand,
And both dost make with thy laborious Hand)
Thy noble innocent delight :
And in thy virtuous Wife, where thou again dost meet
Both Pleasures more refin’d and sweet :
The fairest Garden in her Looks,
And in her mind the wisest Books.
Oh ! who would change these soft and solid Joys,
For empty Shows, and senseless Noise ;
And all which rank Ambition breeds,
Which seem such beauteous Flow’rs, and are such
poisonous weeds ? ”

But, turning from these “ trim walks, and shady alleys green,” to the interior of the mansion, we find that Sayes Court, small as its dimensions appear to modern notions, for some time accommodated two families. A brother of Lady Browne, in whose care it had been left during her husband’s absence at the court of France, continued to reside there with his family for nearly three years after it had become his niece’s home. Such arrangements were by no means uncommon. Indeed, the most usual plan appears to have been for young married persons to live for some years with the relatives of either the husband or wife. The Duchess of Newcastle’s brothers and sisters, after their respective marriages, continued to make their mother’s house their home. The father of Bulstrode Whitelocke had, as part of his wife’s portion, his board found him gratis for a year and a

half by her mother. The Countess of Warwick, in her autobiography, gives an amusing description of the dismay with which her mother-in-law fled from her approach; the poor lady having suffered so much at the hands of Lady Rich, wife of the eldest son, "as almost to have come to a resolution of never more living with any daughter-in-law."

The extreme youth of the parties between whom marriages were often contracted, rendered such a custom, in many cases, quite necessary. For in those days the care of a house was considered far too arduous an undertaking to be committed to the unpractised hands of a child-bride. She was expected to take on herself the government, as well as to accept the services, of those who attended on her; and, like the virtuous woman in the Proverbs, was called on "to give meat to her household and a portion to her maidens." There was, perhaps, a truer idea of family life prevailing then than that which now exists. Far from being regarded as "necessary evils," servants were essentially members of the family they served, by whom they were admitted into familiar intercourse, and of whose sympathy they were well assured. Instead of being bound as hirelings by mere mercenary considerations, their interests became identified with those of their employers, who always superintended, and often shared their labours. The different class from which the domestic servants of the higher ranks were taken, rendered easy in those days what would be less practicable in these. "There was

then," says Bishop Heber, "no supposed humiliation in offices which are now accounted menial, but which the peer received as a matter of course from the 'gentlemen of his household,' and which were paid to the knights or gentlemen by domestics, chosen in the families of their own most respectable tenants; whilst in the humbler ranks of middle life it was the uniform and recognized duty of the wife to wait on her husband, the child on his parents, the youngest of the family on his elder brothers and sisters."

Perhaps in some respects we are not altogether gainers by the progress of society.

Anne, Countess of Dorset, Pembroke, and Montgomery, for all her three-fold title, was accustomed to divert herself by familiar conversations with her servants, looking even on the lowest amongst them as her humble friends. In the same light were they regarded by the gentle Countess of Suffolk, of whom it is said, "that her servants fared not the worse for the inferiority of their stations; she was as tender of their errors as she was of those of her friends." She would endure any inconvenience rather than suffer them by equivocation to excuse her from the necessity of receiving company, or to seek themselves to escape from the performance of some distasteful duty. The unhappy wife of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, who, surviving her husband, lived to the middle of the century, though ruling her household with all the rigidity that might be anticipated from her ascetic nature, was yet very

well content that her servants should all have convenient sport and recreation, with this proviso, that it was in due time and place. But there was no idleness permitted in that house. Her gentlewomen and chambermaids were kept in constant employment for the service of the church. Embroidery and lace-work filled up their time. To rescue the rest of the establishment from the devices found "for idle hands to do," there constantly resided in the house a person skilled in carpet-work, to whose assistance all, who found themselves with a spare half hour at their disposal, were sent. We may imagine the vigilance required to enable the old Countess to carry out these arrangements. Very slight acquaintance with the domestic manners of the century will convince us, that personal superintendence of the household was considered essentially the duty of the lady of the house. That it would be well if in the present day such a conviction prevailed, is the opinion of one whose words cannot fail to be listened to with respectful attention. "Don't imagine," says Miss Nightingale, "that if you, who are in charge, don't look to all these things yourself, those under you will be more careful than you are. It appears as if the part of a mistress now is, to complain of her servants, and to accept their excuses; not to show them how there need be neither complaints made nor excuses. It is often said," she continues, "that there are few good servants now. I say there are few good mistresses now. * * * * They seem to think the house is

in charge of itself. They neither know how to give orders, nor how to teach their servants to obey orders, that is, to obey intelligently, which is the real meaning of all discipline."

But a deep conviction that One was their Master Who was in heaven, led many to a more earnest care for their servants than that which ensured the fulfilment of their duty only to themselves. When a family had any respect for religion, the domestics were as sedulously trained to its observances as the children of the house. The weekly or monthly catechist attended to supply religious instruction in some houses; in others the servants were required on Sunday evening to repeat all they could remember of the morning's discourse. Lady Langham used to call her maids early in the morning, that she might be sure of their having time enough for their private devotions, before she required their attendance upon herself. And Lady Alice Lucy was accustomed to leave her own apartment to join in the psalms and hymns, with which her men and maids used to make the old halls of Charlecot resound at night.

Generally, however, the tone of feeling, as regarded the position of servants, was far higher than it is at present. Pepys, who does not shine particularly in his domestic relations, always accounts his servants as part of his family; and he found a servant the truest friend of his declining years. It was not, perhaps, a very propitious conclusion to Mrs. Pepys's engagement of a maid because she was

in want of company, that the same fair hands, which had before helped in killing the turkey, or preparing the pasty, should administer personal chastisement to the offending damsel. Intercourse, however, with their domestics, and employments that led to their associating with them, were not disdained by ladies of better temper, and of higher breeding. As we should count up a lady's accomplishments, and include logic and leather-work, music and mathematics, so the Duchess of Newcastle, amongst "such works as ladies use to pass their time withall," enumerated:—"Needle-works, spinning-works, preserving-works, as also baking, and cooking-works, as making cakes, pyes, puddings and the like."

Mrs. Evelyn looked upon "the care of cakes, stilling, and sweet-meats, and such useful things," as her especial vocation; and it is not to be doubted that she is "the experienced housewife," from whom Evelyn obtained the recipes which he appended to his "Acetaria." It was an ungrateful return, therefore, when from his "philosophical supper" at the Royal Society, where the repast was dressed entirely in M. Papin's newly-invented apparatus, he sent a glass of jelly to his wife, "to the reproach of all that ladies ever made of their best hartshorn." But, notwithstanding this philosophical pleasantry of his, such homely lore was highly prized by him. After the Restoration had swept its tide of dissipation and disorder through the land, Evelyn, looking back with regret upon the simple manners that pre-

vailed in his younger days, and which were now fast fading away, thus described old-fashioned country life:—"Men courted and chose their wives for their modesty, frugality, keeping at home, good housewifery, and other economical virtues, then in reputation; and the young damsels were taught all these in the country, and at their parents' houses. * * * They had cupboards of ancient, useful plate, whole chests of damask for tables, and store of fine Holland sheets, white as the driven snow, and fragrant of rose and lavender, for the bed; and the sturdy oaken bedstead and furniture of the house lasted one whole century; the shovel-board and other long tables, both in hall and parlour, were as fixed as the freehold; nothing was moveable save joint-stools, the black jacks, silver tankards and bowls. 'Twas then ancient hospitality was kept up in town and country, by which the tenants were enabled to pay their landlords at punctual day, the poor were relieved bountifully; and charity was as warm as the kitchen, where the fire was perpetual. In those happy days Surefoot, the grave and steady mare, carried the good knight and his courteous lady behind him to church and to visit the neighbourhood, without so many rattling coaches, and a crew of lacqueys, which a grave livery-servant or two supplied, who rid before and made way for his worship.

"The virgins and young ladies of that golden age *quæsierunt lanam et linum*, put their hands to the spindle, nor disdained they the needle; were

obsequious and helpful to their parents, instructed in the managery of the family, and gave presages of making excellent wives. Their retirements were devout and religious books, and their recreations in the distillatory, the knowledge of plants and their virtues for the comfort of their poor neighbours and use of their family, which wholesome, plain diet, and kitchen physic preserved in perfect health."

Such were the accomplishments that Evelyn valued, and in these his lady soon attained to proficiency, as became the wife of one, who, when the Czar Peter wished to see some "good, honest country English gentleman," was at once referred to by his friends, as the best type of that character. But, that attention to household cares was not of necessity opposed to more intellectual pursuits or refined tastes, Mrs. Evelyn also gave evidence. The illustration designed by her for her husband's translation of Lucretius proves not only her artistic skill, but the sympathy she showed, and the share she took in the pursuits that gave him pleasure. She was acquainted with both the French and Italian languages, and of her enamel and other paintings Ralph Thoresby speaks with great admiration. Cowley's opinion of her mental powers, expressed in the verses already quoted, is fully confirmed by the character of her, written by her son's tutor, Dr. Bohun, with whom for many years she corresponded. He especially commended her letters relating to public affairs, which have been unluckily lost. An attentive and intelligent listener to the

discourse of the learned and scientific men who constantly formed part of the circle at Sayes Court, still she recognized the imperative claims of her household and family as of prior importance to all intellectual self-advancement, or to the attainment of literary distinction. "Women," she says, "were not born to read authors, and censure the learned, to compare lives, and judge of virtues, to give rules of morality and sacrifice to the Muses." Elsewhere, in making some remarks on Dryden's "Siege of Grenada," she excuses herself for the slightness of her criticisms by pleading the interference of her domestic duties. "This account, perhaps, is not enough to do Mr. Dryden right, yet it is as much as you can expect from the leisure of one who has the care of a nursery."

Eminently practical as Mrs. Evelyn was in her own character, she had but small patience with flights of sentiment or unprofitable speculations in others. Evelyn speaks of her as having a far sedater temper than himself; and of this calmness of disposition there are indications in her letters. It was, however, never chilled into apathy, or narrowed into selfishness. There is a kindliness and a simplicity of spirit in them that prepossess us more in favour of the writer than the Ciceronian periods to which her panegyrist directs our attention; for it is not enough for a woman that she opens her mouth with wisdom, unless the law of kindness is on her lips.

In one letter the good-natured alacrity with which

she performs a little commission, committed to her by Mrs. Evelyn of Wotton, shows her proficiency in the art of gracefully rendering small services ; which, trifling in themselves, serve so strongly to cement friendships, and contribute so much to the pleasantness of social intercourse. In another, whilst welcoming some newly-married cousins of her husband to her house, she betrays her anxiety to support her credit as a good housekeeper in their eyes. In a third, we find her endeavouring, both with good sense and good feeling, to induce a neighbour to return to her husband, from whom she had parted in anger. In all she manifests such a warm and lively sympathy, in whatever concerns the interests of her friends, that we can readily believe her to have been, as she is quaintly described, "the delight of all the conversations where she appeared."

Undoubtedly her French education gave her an advantage in society over her countrywomen. Their defective manners, Evelyn, with pathos, deplored as he contrasted their deficiency in "assurance, address, and charming discourse," with the polished "*damoselles*" amongst whom his wife had passed her early youth. In society, for the most part, men talked together on topics that had most interest for them. Women, consequently declining in the art of conversation, fell into the merest gossip, or at best into a dull discussion of domestic details. Their demeanour, alternating from an extreme shyness and embarrassment to one marked by as great familiarity of behaviour and address, must have been

not a little startling to a person inured to the refined conventionalities and the stately grace that prevailed in the court of the Grand Monarque.

But whatever secret consciousness Mrs. Evelyn may have possessed of her own superiority, she never allowed it to appear to the discomfiture of others. "Though no person living," we are told, "had a closer insight into the humours or characters of persons, or could distinguish their merits more nicely, yet she never made any despising or censorious reflections: her great discernment and wit were never abused to sully the reputation of others, nor affected applause that might be gained by satirical jests." That lip-service, which we are but too ready to render to the world in slighting speech, and civil contempt, and jesting judgment of our neighbour, entered not, it would seem, into her arts of pleasing. This was, indeed, all the more necessary, thrown as she was into the society of persons of every shade of opinion, and taste, and character. For the hospitality of Sayes Court, which was accepted by royalty and extended to savans, divines, and men of letters, was not withheld from the country neighbours at Deptford. "Do not," writes Mrs. Evelyn to one of her correspondents, "do not impute my silence to neglect. Had you seen me these ten days continually entertaining persons of different humour, age, and sense, not only at meals, or afternoon, or the time of a civil visit, but from morning till night, you will be assured it was impossible for me to finish these few

lines sooner; so often have I set pen to paper and been taken off again."

With her husband's relatives she appears to have been on very happy terms, and she warmly expressed her sense of the kindness shown to her by "the worthy and deserving family" into which she had entered. Except for an occasional journey to Wotton, or a visit in the winter to town, Mrs. Evelyn seldom quitted her pleasant home. At Christmas she entertained her country neighbours. In the summer her house was thronged by visitors from the metropolis. Once, indeed, in the early years of their marriage, she accompanied her husband on a *progress* of seven hundred miles through the principal English counties. This tour, which occupied a period of four months, and was perpetrated ponderously in a coach and four, is minutely described by Evelyn in his "Diary." We cannot but wish that his wife also had bequeathed to us her first impressions of her native country. But no letters of hers of so early a date have been preserved. The collection, made by Dr. Bohun, and to which he intended his "Character" of the writer to serve as preface, has disappeared. Of what remained only a selection has been made public. We may, however, more contentedly resign ourselves to the loss, remembering through what risks the rest of the Evelyn Papers have been preserved to us.

"In 1814," we are told, "Mr. W. Upcott being on a visit at Wotton in Surrey, and sitting after dinner with Lady Evelyn and her friend Mrs. Mo-

lineux, his attention was attracted to a tippet of feathers on which Lady Evelyn was employed.

“ ‘ We have all of us our hobbies, I perceive, my lady,’ said Mr. Upcott.

“ ‘ Very true,’ returned her ladyship, ‘ and pray what may yours be ? ’

“ ‘ Mine, madam, from a very early age began by collecting provincial copper tokens ; and, latterly, the handwriting of men who have distinguished themselves in every walk of life.’

“ ‘ Handwritings ! ’ exclaimed Lady Evelyn with surprise, ‘ what do you mean by handwritings ? Surely, you don’t mean old letters ? ’—at the same time, opening the drawer of her work-table, and taking out a small parcel of papers, some of which had just been used by Mrs. Molineux as patterns for articles of dress. The sight of this packet, though of no literary importance, yet containing letters written by eminent characters, (more particularly one from the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough,) afforded the greatest pleasure to Mr. Upcott, who expressed exceeding delight in looking them over.

“ ‘ Oh ! ’ exclaimed Lady Evelyn, ‘ if you care for papers like these, you shall have plenty ; for Sylva Evelyn’ (the familiar appellation applied to John Evelyn by his descendants), ‘ and those who succeeded him, preserved all their letters.’

“ Then, ringing for her confidential attendant,—
“ ‘ Here,’ said her ladyship, ‘ Mr. Upcott tells me he is fond of collecting old letters ; take the key of

the ebony cabinet in the billiard-room, procure a basket, and bring down some of the bundles.'

"Mr. Upcott accompanied the attendant, and having brought a quantity of these letters into the dining-room, passed an agreeable evening in examining the contents of each packet; with the assurance from Lady Evelyn that he was welcome to lay aside any that he might desire for his own collection. On the following evening the ebony cabinet was visited a second time; when Evelyn's 'Kalendarium,' as he had entitled it, or 'Diary,' in a small quarto volume, very closely written with his own hand, presented itself. This interesting family document had been lent by Lady Evelyn from time to time to her particular friends, yet she did not consider its contents of sufficient importance for publication, and, except for accident, it might have been cut up for dress-patterns, or lighting fires."

One letter, however, affording a delightful picture of the Evelyns' home, happily escaped the scissors of Mrs. Molineux, and the other casualties to which MSS. are liable. It is that written by Jeremy Taylor after a visit to Sayes Court, in April, 1656, when Mr. Berkeley, Robert Boyle, "that excellent person, and great virtuoso," with Dr. Wilkins, (brother-in-law of the Protector, and afterwards Bishop of Chester,) were of the party:—

"SIR," he wrote, "I did believe myself so very much bound to you for your so kind, so friendly reception of me in your Tusculanum, that I had some little wonder upon me when I saw you making excuses that it was no

better. Sir, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heap and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of the prettiness of your abode, or so low an opinion of your prudence and piety, as to think you can be any ways transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month's possession; and that strangers and seldom-seers feel the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and the cleanness of all your outward things; and look upon you not only as a person, by way of thankfulness to God for His mercies and goodness to you, specially obliged to a greater measure of piety, but also as one, who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can without excuse and allay, wholly intend what you so passionately desire, the service of God."

Taylor at this time occupied the post of Evelyn's spiritual adviser. The rector of Deptford had been ejected from his living, and his place supplied by a Presbyterian minister. Evelyn continued to attend the Sunday morning service at his parish church; but confessed that he did so more to escape the imputation of Romanism, than for any edification that he received. In the afternoon he assembled his family for catechetical instruction in the library. And it was probably at this time that he composed a manual of devotions, entitled "Mental Communion;" which he always carried about with him, and which was intended, like the "Golden Grove," to supply the place of the "Common Prayer Book," the use of which was then forbidden. It was in the

library also at Sayes Court, that Mrs. Evelyn was churched and her children christened ; and on the high festivals divine service was performed there by the deprived incumbent of Eltham.

Sometimes on these occasions they went up to London in order to attend the service at the little church of St. Gregory near St. Paul's, where the use of the Liturgy was for a while connived at. When this last retreat was closed to them, they, with other members of the English Church, assembled in private houses for the celebration of the Holy Communion ; not always without incurring some risk. Thus on Christmas Day, 1658, whilst they were attending divine worship in the chapel at Exeter House, they were surprised by the entrance of a body of soldiers. Notwithstanding this interruption the service was proceeded with ; and the communicants approached the altar under the levelled muskets of the military. At the conclusion of the service the whole congregation was taken into custody. Some were confined in the house, and some carried away. But, after a frivolous examination, and some threatening language, they appear to have been dismissed without farther penalty.



IV.

Mrs. Evelyn's troubles—Death of her mother, and of a child—The eldest, a boy of great promise—His illness and death—Loss of another child—Letter of J. Taylor on the double affliction—Mrs. Evelyn's remarks on indulging children—Her advice to her son—Early religious training—Change in system of education during the seventeenth century.

THESE rude tests of faith were not the only interruptions to the peaceful course of domestic life which we are attempting to delineate. The trials, of which an affectionate nature is most keenly sensible, Mrs. Evelyn was called to endure. Her joy at the birth of her eldest child was speedily overcast by the loss of her mother. Her death, which occurred at Sayes Court, in September, 1652, was in some sense a public calamity; her house in Paris having been the resort of all her distressed countrymen in that city. Over her remains the beautiful burial office of the Church was, by special permission, allowed to be read in the parish church of Deptford, after having been for seven years discontinued there.

We can almost trace in this exception, made in her favour, a recompense for the faithful constancy

with which Sir Richard Browne had adhered to his mother church during the hour of her persecution. The congregation that assembled in his chapel having been adduced as a witness of the visibility and existence of the English Church by its suffering and exiled members, when by its opponents it was declared to be utterly extinct. The Duke of Gloucester attended the chapel of the Embassy regularly. When Henrietta Maria quarrelled with him for refusing to join the Romish communion, and openly passed him without recognition, it was thither he turned to hide his wounded feelings, accompanied by his brother the Duke of York.

Rather more than a year had passed after the death of Lady Browne, when a little grave was opened near hers, to receive the form of her infant grandson, the second of her daughter's children. But this sorrow had grown calm, and was treasured only as the hallowed memory of a grief. Evelyn had by his own mother's example learned to dread the effects of over-indulged feeling; her life having fallen a sacrifice to her excessive sorrow for the loss of a beloved daughter.

A letter of condolence written by him to his eldest brother, on the loss of a son, seems to refer to his own trial at this time, and suggests the considerations from which he sought consolation for himself, and by which he would enforce it on others:—

“CHILDREN,” he says, “are such blossoms as every trifling wind deflowers; and to be disordered at their fall, were to be fond of certain troubles, but the most uncer-

tain comforts; whilst the store of the more mature which God has yet left you, invite both your resignation and your gratitude. So extraordinary prosperity as you have hitherto been encircled with, was indeed to be suspected; nor may he think to bear all his sails, whose vessel (like yours) has been driven by the highest gale of felicity. We give hostages to Fortune when we bring children into the world; and how unstable this is we know, and must, therefore, hazard the adventure. God has suffered this for your exercise: seek, then, as well your consolation in His rod, as in His staff. Are you offended that it has pleased Him to snatch your pretty babes from the infinite contingencies of so perverse an age, in which there is so little temptation to live?

“At least, consider, that your pledges are but gone a little before you, and that a part of you has taken possession of the inheritance which you must one day enter, if ever you will be happy. Brother, when I reflect on the loss as it concerns our family in general, I could recal my own, and mingle my tears with you (for I have also lost some that are very dear to me); but when I consider the necessity of submitting to the Divine arrests, I am ready to dry them again, and be silent.”

But the cloud to which he here alludes had not, to borrow Jeremy Taylor's words, wetted him deeper than the skin. There was a darker day yet coming on, a bitterer cup yet to be drained. His eldest son, Richard, a beautiful and intelligent boy, was the pride and joy of his parents; they beheld in him, as Dr. Donne's friends related of his childhood, “one, who, like Picus Mirandula, in another age, was rather born, than made, wise.” When an infant of two years and a half, he could perfectly read and pronounce English, Latin, French, and Gothic

letters, and at four years old he could write legibly, and read handwriting. He had then made considerable progress in French and Latin, had a strong passion for Greek, and found pastime in demonstrating the problems of Euclid. But however proudly his parents might relate such achievements, they should not have expected their joy to be long-lived. Not that they believed themselves guilty of forcing this over-ripe intellect. "Let no man think," says Evelyn, "we did crowd his spirit too full of notions." Yet in one hour he was taught "to play the first half of a thorough bass to one of our Church psalms upon the organ." And though he never spent more than two hours a day in study, except what he voluntarily undertook besides, it is not to be questioned that this was far too ample an allowance for a child of four years old, only too apt to learn, and too greedily athirst for knowledge. He not only read, but spoke French accurately, having acquired it from his mother. His morning prayers were repeated in that language. After breakfast, of his own accord, he always used a Latin prayer. He delighted in reciting George Herbert's Poems; and being, as it were, instinctively conscious of its applicability to his own home, his favourite psalm was, "*Ecce quam bonum.*" He learned the Church Catechism early; and, as it would appear, from his mother's lips. It was his first lesson each morning; and so apt a pupil was he, that at five years old he gravely told his father that he held his godfathers to be "disengaged;" for

that, as he himself now understood what his duty was, it would be required of him, and not of them for the future. His was that angel beauty, seen only in children early translated hence — God's image and superscription visibly stamped upon the outward form, enshrining the fair soul that He has marked for Himself.

He had that sweet heavenliness of disposition, that makes us blush that into our unworthy hands should be given the charge of one so precious and so pure. "How easily," wrote Evelyn, counting up one by one the treasures that in that little child were lost to him, "how easily he forgot injuries, when at any time I would break and cross his passions by sometimes interrupting his enjoyments, in the midst of some sweet or other delicious things which allured him; that I might thereby render him the more indifferent to all things."

Alas! the lesson he taught that little one was for his own practice, not for his pupil's; who would speak innocently of being weary of this troublesome world, into which he was scarcely entered, and clearly manifested his meetness for that other world to which he was so early to be removed. Were any sick in the house, he would remind them of the sufferings of their Lord; if friends came to visit him, he would ask them to kneel down with him in prayer. His little brother he used seriously to admonish, though he bore patiently with any annoyances he met with from him, saying, with grave superiority, he was but a child.

Yet with all this he was graceful and animated in manner and demeanour, "all life, all prettiness—far from morose, sullen, or childish, in anything he said or did." There was a quaint propriety in his quotations from his lessons, and in his application of them to passing events, that must have been unspeakably charming and piquant. He had an amazing memory, and acted the scenes of plays, which he was taught to recite, with animation. Even from the long Puritan discourses, which he was taken to hear every Sunday, he managed to extract instruction. As when his father asked him on his return from church, according to custom, what he remembered of the sermon, he gave the sententious but apposite reply:—"Two good things, father, *bonum gratiæ* and *bonum gloriæ*;" adding a just account of what the preacher said. Once, at Christmas, he was listening to the discourse of his elders, as they sat round the fire, when the conversation turned on a quaker at Colchester, who had endured a fast of many days. Wondering what difficulty could be presented by a circumstance which his childish faith found quite simple, he addressed the kinsman on whose knee he sat, and who little guessed what an intelligent listener he had there:—"That," said he, "is no such wonder, for it is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'"

He had, indeed, an amazing knowledge of the Bible; and his employment of scriptural phraseo-

logy was very remarkable. His use of this language, and such as he borrowed from other books, was no mere parrot-like accomplishment ; but out of the abundance of the heart his mouth spoke. The restless energy of his intellect made him uneasy so long as any novelty that he encountered was unintelligible to him ; whilst any difficulty that he met with in his studies, he eagerly sought his parents' aid to overcome. Yet this keen, energetic genius was utterly devoid of the impatience or irritability by which it is too often accompanied. Patient of reproof, incapable of resentment, always cheerful, and always calm, " God having dressed up a saint fit for Himself," transplanted into the heavenly paradise " this incomparable hopeful blossom."

He was seized in the early part of 1658 with an attack of ague, and the fatal conclusion of this illness, which his friends would fain have hidden from themselves, was soon apparent enough to him. He chose the most pathetic psalms, and chapters from the book of Job, and read them aloud to his maid, as applicable to his own case ; and when she, moved with compassion for the innocent sufferer, expressed aloud her pity for him, he told her with quiet, unquestioning submission, that all God's children must suffer affliction.

An aged guide of souls has declared it as his experience, that to the young death is but like passing from one room to another. To this child the angels that were to convey him to Abraham's bosom, dispelled with their brightness the darkness of the

transit. A writer, who himself has had bitter experience of the subject of which he treats, refers to a solemn passage of De Quincey, relating to the solitude which seems to be, sooner or later, appointed for us all. Applying this grave thought to the case of a young child, he continues, "but only to think of that sweet little soul, left to meet death alone! Snatched from life, from mother, sisters, brothers, and all the charms of existence! He is driving out now through the dear scenes he loves, but next week he will have to travel alone beyond the stars into eternity." It may be that some dim idea of this loneliness stirring in him, caused this dear child with passionate pleadings to beseech those who tended him to die with him; for he said he knew he should not live. For six days he languished in great suffering; but the day before his death he called his father to him, and, in a more serious manner than usual, told him, that for all he loved him so dearly, he should give his house, and land, and all his fine things to his brother Jack; for he should have none of them. He sought the prayers of those around him; and, as his agony increased, with piteous exclamations, he implored help of Him Who was born of a woman; yet, his reverent spirit fearing to offend, he asked his father whether he might pray with unfolded hands, or use the holy name of God so often in calling to Him for ease?

"What shall I say," writes Evelyn, "of his frequent pathetic ejaculations, uttered of himself? 'Sweet Jesus, save me, deliver me, pardon my

sins, let Thine angels receive me ! ' ' So in pious breathings his soul passed away, to follow " the child Jesus, that Lamb of God, in a white robe, whithersoever He goeth." His death occurred on the twenty-seventh of January ; it was not until the fourteenth of February that Evelyn communicated his loss to Sir Richard Browne. He makes no mention of his wife, nor are any letters of hers at this period published ; though Dr. Bohun speaks of her deploring her losses " with the most affectionate tenderness that words can express." But a sufficient cause for her silence may be found in the illness of her youngest child George. He, too, after lingering for seven weeks was removed—" the afflicting hand of God being still upon us," as Evelyn expressed himself. The death of his eldest son was a loss which he declared he never expected in this life to be repaired. And full twenty years later, on being introduced at Pepys's table to a young prodigy of learning, he counselled his father not to set too much on this jewel, referring to his own sad experience in his most dear child Richard.

To Jeremy Taylor, who had in the previous summer christened the youngest child in the drawing-room of Sayes Court, he sent the news of his double bereavement, and received from him a letter of condolence, which, eloquent and touching as it is, is too well-known to permit of its insertion in full :—

" I ACCOUNT myself," he writes, " to have a great cause of sorrow, not only in the diminution of the numbers of

your joys and hopes, but in the loss of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my own sorrows without adding to yours ; and the causes of my real sadness in your loss are so just and so reasonable that I can no otherwise comfort you, but by telling you that you have very great cause to mourn." Yet he urges upon him, "Remember, sir, your two boys are two bright stars, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them again. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy terms ; nothing but to be born and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are ; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable grief ; and, indeed, though the grief hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no losers, but you are the person that complains, do but consider what you would have suffered for their interests ; you would have suffered them to go from you, to be great Princes in a strange country ; and if you can be content to suffer your own inconvenience for their interests, you commend your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end." In conclusion he adds, "You have now an opportunity of serving God by passive graces ; strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel or comfort stand in the breaches of your own family, and make it appear that you are more to her than ten sons."

This reference to Mrs. Evelyn is the only allusion we find to her in this time of trial. But her tenderness as a mother was avouched by those who knew her well ; and was even made a matter of censure by those who were not her friends.

Writing to one of her relatives at Wotton, she says, apparently in reply to some disparaging ob-

servations which had been repeated to her :—" You need not fear a long comment upon the lady's censure of my indulgence to children, since I confess myself too much inclined to that failing ; but I have a maxim, never to disturb the company with my own affairs, in showing dislike to servants' mistakes and children's faults ; so that sometimes, I believe, I pass for a very fond mother and a remiss mistress ; yet, it may be, in a convenient place both are re-proved ; and amongst those who understand civility very well, this method is not unacceptable."

No doubt the loss of so many children led her to regard those that survived with an almost passionate tenderness, as treasures lent to her for a brief interval, which at any moment she might be required to resign. Another little Richard, born in 1664, though a healthy, promising infant, died when only a month old. " After evening prayers," wrote Evelyn, " was my child buried near the rest of his brothers, my very dear children."

For many years, therefore, their son John enjoyed the privileges and perils of an only child. Yet from some of his mother's letters, addressed to him, it is apparent that she was capable of administering very grave reproof, and serious counsel, in her earnest desire that he might attain " that early wisdom which prevents a late repentance."

The merciful severity of her language, and the prominence given to the religious element in the education of her children, were quite in accordance with the tone of thought which prevailed amongst

the more excellent of her century. Religious instruction, far from being confined to a stated lesson imparted in a short hour spared from accomplishments, was the ground-work on which the whole system rested. Habits of self-restraint were early enforced, and a deep sense of moral responsibility inculcated; for a careless, thoughtless childhood was not by these guides of youth held a meet preparation for a godly and Christian life.

Anna, Lady Halket began when young to observe stated days of fasting. From her earliest years she was in the habit of noting down the most remarkable events in her life, tracing the hand of Providence in the ordering of them. To this record she was often glad to have recourse for comfort and encouragement, during the vicissitudes of her sorely-tried life. Her mother's chief care, we are told, had been "to instruct her children in the principles and practices of religion, teaching them to begin and end every day with prayer and reading a portion of Scripture in order, and daily to attend the church, as often as was occasion to meet there, either for preaching or prayer."

In self-discipline Lady Halket made progress be-times. 'Having in a quarrel with her sister, whilst they were at play, bitten her finger, she was so overwhelmed with remorse, that, after a passion of tears, she resolved, and kept to her resolution, never to join in any games in which she found herself tempted to anger. Upon another occasion, disappointed at being left at home by her mother who

had gone out visiting, the young philosopher consoled herself by counting up all the misdeeds of which she might possibly have been guilty, had she accompanied her, and balancing the reproofs they would have cost her against the pleasure she was denied. And so constantly did she train herself in this habit of thought, that "what she most earnestly desired became indifferent to her, and she observed that she more readily obtained her desire in anything about which she was thus indifferent, than in that she was most eager upon."

Frances, Lady Carbery, was extolled by Jeremy Taylor for being as excellent a mother as she was "a rare wife." To her children he describes her as having been "kind and severe, careful and prudent, very tender, and not at all fond." And again, "the severe and angry education" which she herself received, he accounted amongst the special mercies of her life.

The whole system of early training, at this time, tended strongly to eradicate that frivolity of temper, and unreality of tone, which stunt so fatally the growth of all moral and mental excellence. On the other hand, it especially fostered that child-like spirit that wins its way into the Kingdom of Heaven. But severity did not necessarily include harshness, even if sometimes it unfortunately assumed that form. Children, though permitted less familiarity of address than at present, were, perhaps, admitted to still more constant intercourse with their parents.

In Evelyn's time, it is true, "colleges of young

gentlewomen," as he termed them, existed in the environs of London. But, generally, female education was not only conducted at home, but the mother was herself the chief instructor there. For, though accepting assistance from other sources, she was not content to depute her highest duty wholly to the hands of another. It was by their mother, then, that the young daughters were instructed in their household duties. And, whilst in these and in her works of charity they contributed their aid, she led and joined in their devotions. In one instance, an oratory was added to the nursery for this purpose. Thus at the rising of the sun, and the going down thereof, the incense of praise, and the pure offering of infant lips ascended an acceptable sacrifice on high.

These observations and examples apply rather to the earlier half of the century, when greater gravity of manners, and a higher tone of feeling prevailed. But, whilst the contagion of vice and infidelity was spreading rapidly in the circle of the Court, and amongst the votaries of fashion, we still find "the selected spirits of the hour" adhering to a severe and earnest rule of life. Early habit had made easy to them what to those trained in softness and self-indulgence would have presented insuperable obstacles. Early impressions had prepared for them a spell mightier than all the allurements of pleasure, or than the subtler dangers of unbelief. By its aid they out of much tribulation came

with white robes, conquerors of the world and of themselves.

Amongst those holy homes where religion was nurtured, and virtue throve, must be numbered that of the Evelyns. Here, as time wore on, the gaps which death had made were mercifully filled up again, and an example of a Christian family was afforded to a degenerate age. Hence one of its members briefly but forcibly described it, as “this home, where we serve God above all things.”





V.

Mr. Evelyn's scheme of a scientific college—His part in the Restoration—Noticed by King Charles—Sayes Court visited by the Royal Family—Contrasted with its present condition—Sir R. Browne's return to England—Mr. Evelyn ceases to attend at Court—Plague at Deptford—Retreat of his family to Wotton—Noble conduct of Mrs. Mompesson, recorded by her husband—Visit to Duchess of Newcastle—Mrs. Evelyn's description of it—Birth and education of her daughters.

THE years immediately succeeding those in which such heavy domestic trials darkened the hearth of Sayes Court, were the most varied and exciting in the experience of its inhabitants. In the deep languor of spirit, induced by repeated bereavements, Evelyn had proposed to his friend Robert Boyle the plan of a scientific college, to which they with friends of similar intellectual taste might retire. From this retreat Mrs. Evelyn was not to be excluded. And she either willingly lent herself to the project, or with nice tact affected to approve a plan, the formation of which proved so timely a diversion to her husband's thoughts.

But these pensive dreams were soon dispelled by

the portents that foretold the great changes impending in public affairs. "The sky full of meteors and evil prognostics," as Jeremy Taylor, in a letter from Ireland, described it, was for the friends of monarchy brightening towards the dawn. Evelyn threw himself eagerly into the plots now rife for the Restoration of the Stuarts. His pen was busy, and all his powers of persuasion were employed in enlisting supporters to their cause. If he and his family thus incurred risk for their sovereign, in his hour of triumph they, too, shared. Charles, it is true, confessed some natural apprehension lest the panegyric composed in his honour by his loyal subject should exceed in length; but he bestowed upon him particular notice, and talked to him, as one man of science to another, about the planet Saturn, and perpetual motion. Mrs. Evelyn and her little boy were introduced to Henrietta Maria and her daughter, who complimented the mother and kissed the child. Nay, the King himself conducted Mrs. Evelyn through the private apartments, promised her the post of Lady of the Jewels to his Queen when she came, and graciously accepted a beautiful miniature copy made by her from a painting by Raphael.

Sayes Court became the resort of royal guests. The King, the Queen, the Princess Henrietta, and the Duke of York, came, and saw, and admired. Courtiers crowded the chambers, and maids of honour sauntered amongst the parterres.

The Venetian Ambassador, with "a very glorious

train," was entertained there before proceeding in the king's barge to the Tower. Travellers told strange stories to their host, men of science tried experiments in his laboratory, and statesmen in his company cast aside their cares.

Clarendon came in state with his purse and mace carried before him, thus fulfilling a hopeful augury of his in former times. For, writing from Bruges to Sir Richard Browne, in 1656, he declared that they had no reason to despair of better days, or that they might "not eat cherries at Deptford again."

The scene of these stately festivities has long been given over to neglect. In a blank patch of garden-ground at the end of Czar Street, Deptford, an unsightly building,* once used as the parish workhouse, and, subsequently, for the temporary reception of emigrants, occupies the site, and incorporates some of the walls, of Sayes Court. An arbor vitæ, successor, if not sole survivor, of the bosky shades reared by the author of the "*Sylva*," stands a mournful guardian of the spot "where once the garden smiled." A few cherry-trees still blush with fruit there, and a mulberry-tree, said to have been planted by Evelyn, has only of late years disappeared. These scanty relics are all that remain to remind us of a home adorned with so many virtues, and

* It has quite recently passed from the Evelyn family into the hands of the Government, and has been converted into an office for the payment of pensioners, and a depôt of the accoutrements and arms to be used by them when called out for occasional duty.

enriched with such intellectual resources. Through this dreary waste, encroached upon by narrow streets, and resigned to decay, plumed cavaliers and jewelled dames swept by in Charles's train; when Evelyn's philosophic soul, and even his wife's sedater nature, were stirred from their wonted calm with the elation of receiving their monarch as their guest.

These satisfactions, however, had their drawbacks. Sir Richard Browne, now returned from Paris, was disappointed of the Wardenship of Merton College, where it had been his desire to end his days. Neither could he obtain a settlement of the debt long owed to him from the Crown. During the twenty years he resided at the court of France he received only £1,200, though he spent as much as that yearly. But not until long after his death did Evelyn succeed through the interest of Godolphin, then Lord Treasurer, in recovering a portion of the money due to his father-in-law. The Queen Mother, indeed, crossed the gallery at Whitehall to thank Mr. Evelyn for his work on "Architecture," and the Princess Henrietta made his wife an "extraordinary compliment" on his "Character of England," which she had presented to her on her arrival. Yet His Majesty forgot all about his promise of making Mrs. Evelyn Lady of the Jewels, and Catherine of Braganza utterly refused her patronage to Grinling Gibbons, when introduced to her notice by Evelyn.

A brief acquaintance with the Court sufficed both for him and his wife. They returned to their quiet

country home, all the better pleased with it by contrast. And here Evelyn employed himself in the composition of his delightful "*Sylva*," and in other literary employments. But that calm retreat could not secure him and his family against the fearful visitation, which in the year 1665 spread panic around. The plague that was desolating the metropolis crept nearer and nearer, until it appeared in the confined cottages of the rapidly-increasing village of Deptford. Thirty families were already stricken. At last it broke out in the house nearest to Sayes Court. Evelyn, early in July, sent away his boy with his tutor to Wotton. He was himself detained in Deptford as one of the Commissioners of the Sick and Wounded during the Dutch war; and his "courageous wife," as he termed her, was not to be persuaded to quit him. Not until the last days of August, and after a servant of their own had shown symptoms of the fearful malady, would she consent to join her son at Wotton. And even then it seems probable, that she yielded as much out of regard to the safety of another as on her own account, as in little more than a month afterwards her eldest daughter was born.

If Mrs. Evelyn is to be admired for the courage with which she faced danger by her husband's side, a still higher example of a love that was stronger than death was afforded during the same visitation by Mrs. Mompesson, the wife of the rector of Eyam in Derbyshire. Dwelling in a remote country home, amongst a simple, uncultivated people, her station

and disposition were such as seemed to promise a life of peaceful obscurity. She is described as a tender mother, a frugal manager, a good neighbour, and a devoted wife. Quietly occupied with her domestic duties, and content to be so employed, her character was just such a one as in ordinary circumstances would never have ranked above mediocrity. Of a fragile form and gentle bearing, she was, says her husband, "composed of modesty and humility." "Her discourse," he adds, "was ever grave and meek, yet pleasant withal; a vaunting, immodest word was never heard to come out of her mouth." Again, he commends her domestic arrangement with a solemnity of asseveration which shows how important a feature he held it in her portrait. "She was never lavish or profuse, but commendably frugal; so that I profess, in the presence of God, I never knew a better housewife. She never delighted in the company of tattling women, and abhorred as much a wandering temper of going from house to house to the spending of precious time, but was ever busied in useful occupation. In all her ways she was extremely prudent, kind and affable; yet to those from whom she thought no good could be reaped from their company, she would not unbosom herself, but in civility would dismiss their society."

She was simply attached to the form of faith in which she was trained in childhood, her intellect never being employed in questioning the grounds of that authority to whose dictates her mind and will surrendered themselves. Yet under this modest seeming,

and amidst the homely circumstances of her lot, there was maintained in her a Divine energy, which in the hour of trial inspired her with the utmost contempt of danger, and enabled her with serene composure to choose death rather than desert her duty. Her will was resolute, but it was in self-surrender that its force was displayed. Her courage was exalted, but it was in patient endurance that it found its full development.

In the spring of 1666, long after the plague had abated in other districts, it broke out again in the village of Eyam, to which it was carried in some infected woollen goods. On its first appearance Mr. Mompesson urged his wife, already in delicate health, to quit the scene of danger. He represented to her, that, although his duty bound him to remain amongst his parishioners, no such claim compelled her to imperil her life. When she was not thus to be persuaded, he entreated her to save her children by flying with them. She said she would live and die with him, though she allowed the children to be removed. Separated alike from them and from all but her husband, and his afflicted flock, she remained to cheer and support with her presence those, whose happiness she had sought and whose interests she had preferred at all times before her own. "I do believe," wrote Mr. Mompesson, "that she was the kindest wife in the world; and I do think from my soul that she loved me ten times more than herself." And he declared that "she never valued anything she had, when the ne-

cessity of her poor neighbours did require it, but had a bountiful heart to all indigent and distressed persons." In this season of distress her heart was not likely to be narrowed nor her hand to close. And we find that she assisted her husband in his labours, who, through all the fearful months in which the pestilence prevailed, acted not as priest only, but as nurse and physician to his parishioners. It does not appear that any other medical aid was afforded them ; a cordon being laid down within which the inhabitants of Eyam rigidly confined themselves, holding no communication with the world beyond. Even the necessities of life, conveyed to them from adjacent villages, were cautiously laid down on selected spots in the neighbouring hills. And not until the messengers who had brought them were withdrawn, the inhabitants of Eyam ventured, at an appointed time, to approach the spot and remove the supplies.

All through the summer months the deadly sickness raged. Out of a population of little more than three hundred, two hundred and fifty-six were carried off. The little churchyard was found too narrow for its requirements, and on the hills and fields around grey stones still appear, to mark where in that season of terror the dead were laid. The church itself became, from its proximity to the graves, too dangerous to be approached ; and Mr. Mompesson was accustomed to assemble his parishioners in an open cave, and there to

" ———preach as dying unto dying men."

Though in feeble health he escaped infection—a circumstance which called forth the warmest joy and gratitude of his wife. “She cared not,” he said, “(if I were safe), though her own dear self was in ever so much pain and jeopardy.” So she remained, looking death in the face, until towards the end of August, when plague symptoms began to manifest themselves in her. Even then she knew no fear for herself, but calmly met her inevitable doom. No worldly care invaded her soul’s complete repose. She was at peace with God. And towards man her conscience upbraided her with no graver fault than such as having sometimes spoken angrily to her maid; of whom she asked forgiveness. One only apprehension clouded her serenity; and that was, lest her husband’s safety should be endangered by his attendance upon her. But he was not to be prevailed upon to comply with her earnest entreaties, that he would not approach her during her illness. She owned to him, at last, her thankfulness that she had been unable to shake his resolution. For hers was not the calmness of an apathetic nature. She had parted from her children never to see them again in this life; yet, even in her dying moments, the mere mention of their names roused her to an exertion of which she had before appeared incapable. And, when urged by her husband for their sakes to try some remedy, she drank the cordial, against which (until he used that plea) her dying lips were sealed.

Shortly before her departure, Mr. Mompesson,

who had retired to take some rest, was summoned to her. He found her quietly awaiting "the coming of the Lord." She asked him to pray with her, joining firmly in the responses in the office for the "Visitation of the Sick." But when he proceeded to use some prayers chosen from the "Whole Duty of Man," he found her voice was hushed. "My dear, dost thou mind?" he asked. "Yes," was the last word she spoke; her free-will offering of herself was perfected; and she had become a denizen of that city, the "inhabitant whereof shall not say, I am sick."

A monument, erected in the church of Eyam, records the date of the death of Catherine Mompesson; and a letter of her husband, addressed to their two children, George and Elizabeth, gives a touching narrative of her courage, and fidelity, and of her peaceful death. Mr. Mompesson survived through the perils of the plague, though it was not until late in the autumn that its ravages were abated. At that time, to judge from a letter written to a friend, both his health and spirits were utterly broken; and he had bidden farewell, he said, to all happy days.

To the family at Sayes Court, from whom we have been so long detained, a happier close was granted of the season of danger and distress. At Christmas Mrs. Evelyn had the happiness of being rejoined by her husband at Wotton, in perfect health and safety. But though in the time of trial she had shown herself capable of acting a heroic part,

she utterly disclaimed the position and character of a heroine, as one unbefitting her sex. How strongly this feeling possessed her, is apparent from her account of her interview with the Duchess of Newcastle. That celebrated lady was staying with the Duke, at their house in Clerkenwell, in 1667. The Evelyns, who had been acquainted with them formerly in Paris, where lady Browne had rendered good service to her Grace, visited them there. They were welcomed with the utmost *empressement*, and repeated their visit in the course of a few days. The Duchess, who professed to regard Mrs. Evelyn as her daughter, received her in "a kind of transport," and attired in the most fantastic dress. Of this visit the following account was transmitted to Dr. Bohun:—

"SIR,

I AM concerned you should be absent when you might confirm the suffrages of your fellow-collegists, and see the mistress both universities court; a person who has not her equal possibly in the world, so extraordinary a woman she is in all things. I acknowledge, though I remember her some years since, and have not been a stranger to her fame, I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls. Her habit particular, fantastical, not unbecoming a good shape, which she may truly boast of. Her face discovers the facility of the sex, in being persuaded it deserves the esteem years forbid, by the infinite care she takes to place her curls and patches. Her mien surpasses the imagination of poets, or the description of a romance heroine's greatness; her gracious bows, seasonable nods, courteous stretching out of her hands,

twinkling of her eyes, and various gestures of approbation, show what may be expected from her discourse, which is airy, empty, whimsical, and rambling as her books, aiming at science, difficulties, high notions, terminating commonly in nonsense, oaths, and obscenity. Her way of address to people more than necessarily submissive; a certain general form to all, obliging by repeating affected, generous, kind expressions; endeavouring to show humility by calling things back still to improve her present greatness and favour to her friends.

“ I found Dr. Charlton with her, complimenting her wit and learning in a high manner; which she took to be so much her due, that she swore if the schools did not banish Aristotle, and read Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, they did her wrong, and deserved to be utterly abolished. My part was not yet to speak, but admire; especially hearing her go on magnifying her own generous actions, stately buildings, noble fortunes, her lord's prodigious losses in the war; his power, valour, wit, learning, and industry—what did she not mention to his or her own advantage? Sometimes, to give her breath, came in a fresh admirer; then she took occasion to justify her faith, to give an account of her religion, as new and unintelligible as her philosophy, to cite her own pieces, line and page, in such a book, and to tell the adventures of some of her nymphs. At last I grew weary, and concluded that the creature called a chimera, which I had heard speak of, was now to be seen, and that it was time to retire for fear of infection; yet I hope, as she is an original, she may never have a copy. Never did I see a woman so full of herself, so amazingly vain and ambitious. What contrary miracles does this age produce. This lady and Mrs. Philips! The one transported with the shadow of reason, the other possessed of the substance and insensible of her treasure; and yet men who are esteemed wise and learned, not only put them in even balance, but suffer the greatness of the one to weigh down the certain real worth of the other. This is all I

can requite your rare verses with; which as much surpass the merit of the person you endeavour to represent, as I can assure you this description falls short of the lady I would make you acquainted with: but she is not of mortal race, and, therefore, cannot be defined.

“ M. E.”

Severe as the tone of this letter may be, the fidelity of its portraiture cannot be questioned. Nor less vividly does it reveal the writer's impatience of affectation, and her contempt of shallow surface-acquirements. It bears the impress, indeed, of having been written in a state of considerable provocation. And it must have been not a little aggravating to a sensible, well-informed woman, to have been condemned to assist at the ovation of such a mere pretender as the Duchess. All the more so, perhaps, as even Mr. Evelyn, accommodating himself to the language of the day, affected “ to rank her amongst the heroines, and constellate her amongst the graces.” But if her extravagances of dress, manner, and conversation imposed upon him for a time, all her resources of flattery were exhausted, her “ nods and becks and wreathed smiles” were lavished in vain, upon his wife. The prize aimed at by her Grace had no charms for her. For, as she considered “ all time borrowed from family duties to be misspent,” so she shrank from the thought of a notoriety, which may lift a woman to distinction, but yet fail to win for her esteem. “ The distaff,” she says, “ will defend our quarrels

as well as the sword, and the needle is as instructive as the pen. A heroine is a kind of prodigy; the influence of a blazing star is not more dangerous, or more avoided. Though I have lived under the roof of the learned, and in the neighbourhood of science, it has had no other effect on such a temper as mine, but that of admiration, and that, too, but when it is reduced to practice."

In the safe tranquillity of her home she was content to perform the quiet duties of ordinary life, and in the fulfilment of these she found her highest pleasure. Her son was early sent to Oxford with Dr. Bohun; but three daughters required her care; Mary, born October 1st, 1665, Elizabeth, September 13th, 1667, and Susanna, April 20th, 1669.

Their education was completed at home, with the assistance of the lessons which they received from masters during the winter months, which they spent in London. But, above all, they enjoyed the inestimable advantage on which Evelyn in his account of his eldest daughter dwells, namely, the privilege of being, even from their infancy, surrounded by the superior and intellectual society of those who resorted to their home.

To one friend, and the most valued of the number, may be traced, we fancy, one feature in the character of Mary Evelyn. The reluctance with which she shrunk from a position then most highly coveted, and the steadfastness with which she chose the shelter of her father's home, before the pleasures of the Court, were strengthened, we doubt

not, by her recollection of the words and example of their bright and beloved guest, Mrs. Godolphin. But her life, so remarkable for its piety, preserved amidst the most untoward circumstances, cannot be lightly passed over, and demands an extended narrative.





VI.

Mrs. Evelyn's intimacy with Margaret Blagge—Her early life—Maid of honour to the Duchess of York—Afterwards to Catherine of Braganza—Her religious character—Attachment to Mr. Godolphin—Friendship with Mr. Evelyn—Retirement from Court—Residence with Lady Berkeley, aunt to Mr. Godolphin—She takes part in a court pageant—Is privately married to Mr. Godolphin—Goes to Paris with the Berkeley family, taking charge of young Evelyn—Discloses on her return her marriage—Her devotion to home and charitable duties—The birth of a son—Her death—Recent publication of her life, written by Mr. Evelyn.

IT was about the year 1670 that Mrs. Evelyn first formed the acquaintance of Margaret Blagge, one of the maids of honour to the Queen, and at once readily appreciated the charm of her character, and the fascination of her manner. To her the kindly shelter of such a home as Sayes Court was peculiarly grateful and refreshing. The family there, though for a while drawn towards the vortex of the Court, had gradually subsided into its accustomed course of calm duties, and quiet pleasures. Sir Richard Browne was peacefully closing his declin-

ing years beneath his daughter's care. She, surrounded, as she describes herself, by her "little flock of girls," gladly received into their circle the young maid of honour, who was born in the same month and year as her own gifted boy. Pity and admiration alike were due to one, who, early cast upon the tender mercies of the world, had made experience of its trials, and overcome its temptations.

Her father, Colonel Blagge, had been a faithful servant of the King, with whom he shared the perils of the flight from Worcester. To him, when they parted at White Ladies, Charles had committed the care of his George; the same, doubtless, which his father had on the scaffold delivered into the hands of Bishop Juxon, with the word—"Remember." But in his devotion to the King his own affairs had been neglected, and, at last, became hopelessly involved. His wife found it necessary to separate from her children, and committed her second daughter to the care of the Duchess of Richmond, whom she accompanied to France. There Lady Guildford spared no pains to convert her to the religion of the Queen Mother, which she had herself adopted; using less gentle means than the caresses and endearments by which the Princess Henrietta had sought to win Lady Morton to the faith. What severities could be used with a child of seven years old were employed to compel her to submission; but the little confessor remained firm in her allegiance to the Church of England. After this early proof of her constancy, on returning to

her mother, she received the rite of confirmation from the hands of Gunning, Bishop of Chichester. "Surprised at those early graces which he discovered in her, he admitted her to the Holy Sacrament, when she was hardly eleven years old." Thus strengthened, the young soldier of the Cross entered betimes on the conflict that lay before her. For, almost immediately after this solemn dedication of her life, she was chosen by the Duchess of York as one of her attendants. Separated from home-influences, and removed from her mother's care, she was thus early exposed to the contamination of godless associates, and left at the mercy of that current of evil customs which then prevailed. But "Arethusa," writes her biographer, "passed through those turbulent waters, without so much as the least stain or tincture in her crystal."

By prayer, and fast, and vigil, she had, even in childhood, fortified her courage and armed her soul. Distrustful of her own guidance, she placed herself under the spiritual direction of Dr. Benson, Dean of Hereford. And yet the safeguard of devout habits, and the counsel of religious experience might all have been in vain. But to her came the solemn warning of the grave, as the Divine Voice to Samuel ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord. The horror of the circumstances attending the death of the Duchess of York sunk deep into the soul of her young attendant. Contrasting the melancholy close of her life, unwept, uncared for, with the holy, and happy end of her

mother and other pious friends: "What," she asked, "is this world, what is greatness, what to be esteemed, or thought a wit?"

It was with such contempt of the world and its promises that she entered upon a yet more painful path, when at the age of sixteen she was appointed maid of honour to Catherine of Braganza. The freshness of her childlike beauty was highly prized by eyes, weary of charms that owed too much to art. Her manner, which had all the gaiety of an innocent heart, was, from its bright vivacity, unusually engaging. Her conversation sparkled with wit. Her talent for mimicry rose into one of a still higher order, for she was a graceful and accomplished actress. She was, moreover, one of those neat-handed nymphs who have it in their power, by the many useful services they render, to make themselves universally acceptable, so that at all the court *fêtes* her taste and assistance were eagerly sought. Thus richly endowed, and by no means insensible to the admiration which she excited, her post was one of no little difficulty. All the more so as her elder sister, Henrietta, had won for herself a reputation that was rather notorious than honourable.

But Margaret, with wisdom and resolution befitting a riper age than hers, had formed her plan of life. To it she unshrinkingly adhered; though its observance must have imposed upon her a daily martyrdom of the will, and involved her in an arduous conflict with outward circumstances. She laid down the most rigid rules for the employment

of her time, the direction of her conversation, the performance of her devotions, and the mortification of her besetting foibles. Her sleep was curtailed that she might attend the early prayers of the church. At table her rule of abstinence was so severe as at times to injure her health. Whilst dressing she made death the subject of her thoughts; and every moment she could redeem from her attendance on the Queen was devoted to prayer or to study. She regularly attended the daily service of the Church; employed the eves of the festivals in repeating the Psalter; and spent the whole of Sunday and other holy-days in acts of devotion and works of mercy. She had notice given her every week of the different churches in which the Holy Eucharist would be celebrated, that, if possible, she might every Sunday communicate; besides in the week assisting at the communion of the sick and dying. For she, "smelling the rose above the mould," loved to be in the house of mourning, nay, shrank not from following to the grave those departed in Christ.

To ensure the fulfilment of her purposes she kept a strict account of all her shortcomings, which she forwarded at intervals to her spiritual adviser. Around her room she hung papers containing cipher hints, intelligible only to herself, by which she might be reminded of some duty, or cautioned against some failing. She, besides, bound herself by vows and resolutions. Some of these forcibly illustrate the tone of feeling which pervaded the

English Court; they imply, too, some points in her natural character which rendered her in some degree susceptible of its danger. The reputation of "a wit," and the acknowledgment of her mental and personal charms, by one far removed from her in station, had attractions for her. The greater praise, therefore, is due to her who resisted these allurements. "I have vowed," she wrote, "if it be possible, not to sit up past ten o'clock; therefore, before you engage in company, go down and read this, and be as much alone as you can; and when you are abroad talk to men as little as may be: carry your prayer-book in your pocket, or anything that may decently keep you from conversing with men."

Again she wrote:—"When I go into the drawing-room let me consider what my calling is: to entertain the ladies, not to talk foolishly to men, more especially to the King; let me consider if a traitor be hateful, she that betrays the soul of one is much worse;—the danger, the sin of it. Then, without pretending to wit, how quiet and pleasant a thing it is to be silent, or, if I do speak, that it be to the glory of God."

This was the motive that sustained her amidst the trials of her lot, and animated her to fulfil its duties. "She was fortunate," says Evelyn, "in all she set her hand to, because she laid out all these perfections in the service of God." When compelled by the exigencies of custom to spend many hours at cards, which she detested, she endeavoured, by be-

stowing her winnings upon the poor, to turn even this to good account. When called upon to appear as one of the principal performers in the court theatricals, amidst the flutter and excitement around her, she was still composed and collected. During the rehearsals every moment she could spare was employed in reading. If compelled to enter into conversation, she endeavoured to direct it into a strain of piety and virtue. And whilst withdrawing from the dangerous homage of the King, with the sweet gravity of her gaze she reproved the unhallowed converse of his courtiers. Her grace and ease in acting were the theme of general admiration. But, deaf to the praise accorded her, she sought mortification to her vanity from an occasion which might have ministered especially to its gratification. Surrounded by temptation, and assailed by adulation, she kept herself unspotted from the world. Often, with the accents of flattery sounding in her ears, she would escape from the scenes of dissipation. And the presence, that just before had charmed a courtly circle, would shed brightness in some poor dwelling, or bring consolation to the bed of sickness. Her "religion, pure and undefiled," led her to make the fatherless and widow her friends, and to find her own happiness in seeking that of others. Fully did she enter into the noble sentiment of George Herbert, with whom she owned:—

" All worldly joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

One day, seeing a poor beggar in the street—

“ Now,” she said, turning to her companion, “ how I will make that miserable wretch rejoice.” And, her whole aspect kindling with delight, she sent him an alms of such unwonted liberality as should even surprise him into gladness. The skilful fingers, that were so accomplished in all graceful arts, were often busied in needle-work for the poor. Through Lent this was her constant employment. Sometimes her absence upon her missions of charity would be the subject of remark. “ Those she quitted have wondered why she went from the conversation ; and more they would, had they seen how the scene was changed from a kingly palace to some mean cottage, from the company of princes to poor necessitous wretches ; when by and by she would return as cheerful and in good humour as if she had been about some worldly concern, and excuse her absence in the most innocent manner imaginable.”

But, if she sheltered her good deeds from the contamination of man’s applause, the sunshine of her soul could not be veiled. A sweet serenity was diffused through her whole demeanour. Her seriousness was untinged with gloom ; her piety had in it nothing of moroseness. And so though she

“ No arts essayed but not to be admired,”

yet, even during her attendance upon the Duchess, she found herself the cynosure whose attractions all the crowd of courtiers confessed. None, however, were so deeply sensible of her charms as the grave and taciturn Godolphin ; attracted, it may be, by

the contrast of her bright, open nature to his own reserved and sombre disposition. He was not long in making his sentiments known ; and she, who had hitherto, from a sense of duty, withdrawn herself from her many admirers, now found their flatteries fall on an indifferent ear, and their society wearisome to her preoccupied thoughts. How this attachment tended to deepen her religious convictions, and to strengthen her Christian character, she has very touchingly described :—" At first we thought of nothing but living together, and that we should be happy. But, at last, he was sent abroad by his Majesty and fell sick, which gave me great trouble ; and I allowed more time for prayer and the performance of holy duties than before I had ever done ; and, I thank God, found infinite pleasure in it, far beyond any other, and I thought less of foolish things that used to take up my time. Being thus changed myself, and liking it so well, I earnestly begged of God that He would impart the same satisfaction to him I loved. 'Tis done, (my friend,) 'tis done, and from my soul I am thankful ; and though I believe he loves me passionately, yet I am not where I was : my place is filled up with HIM Who is all in all."

The friend to whom she had thus poured forth her heart, had not without some reluctance consented to assume this title. Margaret Blagge, when she first became a guest at Sayes Court, had been at once unhesitatingly received into the friendship of its lady. But Mr. Evelyn was harder to be persuaded

that any good thing could come out of Nazareth. So difficult is it to separate the individual from accidental circumstances. Many a one has been held an offender for that which is beyond control, whose brightness was the reflex of a pure soul within, and whose generous confidence in the charity of others might have taught their judges a lesson of mercy. Evelyn, at the representation of "the *virtuous* Mrs. Philips' tragedy of Horace," beheld with honest indignation Lady Castlemaine blazing in jewels, and far surpassing in splendour the Queen who sat beside her. His opinion was not likely to be lenient of one, who assisted at these courtly revels, and whose praise was at that very time upon the lips of all who witnessed them. "What mad freaks the maids of honour at Court have!" was not, we may be sure, the remark of Pepys only. Had not one of Mrs. Blagge's fellow-attendants on the Duchess sold oranges in the street for a wager? And what stories were there not related of her own sister Henrietta? Besides, were modesty and religion the likely attributes of a lady who trod the stage with such unblushing self-possession, and rehearsed her part there with such unfaltering fearlessness? Surely that liveliness of manner must, when free from restraint, degenerate into levity; that playful wit was certainly not untinged with satire.

So argued Evelyn, forgetting that simplicity of heart and purity of purpose are the most effectual safeguards against the alarms suggested by self-consciousness, whilst none wear so much of "that

herb called hearts-ease" in their bosoms, as those that keep innocence, and take heed to the thing that is right. His mistake was a very common one. We would fain hew the stones with which God's altar is built after the devices of our own hearts. We forget that holiness consists, not in any one man's mode of life, but in God's Spirit moving on the deep of each man's soul as seemeth Him good, quickening it into existence, and reducing all the varied manifestations of that life into subtle but perfect harmony. "If we were not always bringing ourselves into comparison with others, we should know them better," is a remark very applicable to Evelyn's case. Occupied with his books and his garden, he found it hard to believe that piety could flourish in the atmosphere of a Court, or contemplation be sustained amidst the distractions of the world.

Mrs. Evelyn judged by the safer rule of charity, and quickly admitted Mrs. Blagge to her esteem and sympathy. Charmed with those graces of mind and manner which even a slight acquaintance served to reveal, her husband's insensibility to her new friend's merits seemed incomprehensible to her, and in many an animated debate she strove to win him from the error of his ways. To all her representations he listened with a settled incredulity; and with calm indifference endured the reproach of moroseness and infidelity, bestowed upon him for the harsh opinion he continued to hold of one "so airy and so gay" as this "miracle" of the Court. Mrs. Evelyn was joined in these remonstrances by

the friend, through whom Mrs. Blagge had been introduced to her. This was her neighbour Mrs. Howard, whose two daughters also held situations at Court. Between her husband's family and the Evelyns there had always existed a great intimacy. The residences of many of them were within a short distance of Wotton; and visits to Albury and Deepden are more than once recorded by Evelyn in his "Diary." His son John spent much of his childhood at Arundel House, with the sons of Henry Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, until alarm for his Protestantism obliged his parents to withdraw him from their society.

It was in vain that Mrs. Howard and her daughters joined with Mrs. Evelyn in rallying her husband on his scepticism as to the merits of their friend. He still persisted in accounting her "some airy thing that had more wit than discretion." Upon this they changed the order of their attack, and urged upon him that his incivility to her extended itself to her companion, the younger of the two Howards, from whom he appears to have kept aloof from his dread of encountering a "certain wit" who shared her apartment at Whitehall. Thus assailed, he found himself, at last, compelled to wait upon Dorothy Howard, though at the risk of encountering one "of the little spirits that dwell in Fairy Land," to whose entertainment he felt himself by no means inclined to contribute. She was there, in fact; but the serene composure of her behaviour on that day so favourably impressed him, that he

concluded she might not be "the pert lady" he had fancied. A few chance words courteously spoken, when next they met, confirmed this good opinion. Mr. Evelyn was now prevailed upon to accompany his wife to a dinner given to them by her friend, when the charm of her conversation and the piety of its tone completed his conversion. He wavered no longer, but confessed that even in Charles's Court beauty might be compatible with virtue, graceful manners with piety, and wit, whilst it heightened the charm, need detract nothing from the charity of conversation.

And now we find Mrs. Evelyn, accompanied by "that excellent creature Mrs. Blagge," making "a journey of pleasure down the river as far as the sea." Another time it is Mr. Evelyn who entertains the maids of honour at a comedy. "Among them," he says, "there was one I infinitely esteemed for her many and extraordinary virtues."

It was about this time that the following letter was addressed by Mrs. Evelyn to her husband, in which the allusion to "the sprightly saint" is supposed to refer to Mrs. Blagge. The appellations, bestowed by the writer upon herself and some other friends, were probably borrowed from one of the romances then in fashion.

TO MR. EVELYN.

December, 1672.

"MY DEAR,

I HOPE you do not imagine, though I live in the country and converse with sea-nymphs, now and then with a

tarpaulin hero, that I do not apprehend the difference between this kind of felicity and that which you possess in a glorious Court, amongst great beauties and wits, and these so refined that the charm of that splendour has no power on their spirits; persons whose ideas are of a higher nature, whose minds are pure and actions innocent; these, if I could be capable of envy, I should make the subject, but I am so far from failing in that kind that I rejoice in your happiness. I acknowledge you a better judge of such perfections, and to merit the honour of being an admirer of the calm, prudent, and beautiful Alecone, the friendship of the sprightly saint, and to be allowed the liberty of a play-fellow to Ornethia, whose excellences unite your admiration and esteem, since you have qualifications which may entitle you to as much good fortune as any man. If knowledge and discernment in curious and choice speculations, joined with virtues not common, though desirable in your sex, may obtain return of friendship from persons who cannot be unjust, and therefore must allow you a share of their esteem, you may pretend; but should I hope for a part, it must be upon no other account but as I have a little interest in you; and possibly am kindly thought of by you, which happiness produces many advantages to

“ AORTINSA.”

From the “glorious Court,” so respectfully mentioned in this letter, the “great beauty and wit” used gladly to retreat to her friend’s pretty home, where she had a room assigned to her use whenever she chose to occupy it; and was sure of a kindly welcome from all the family. Evelyn speaks of her, as “most dear to his wife and affectionate to his children.” His young son was her devoted admirer. And for himself he venerated as a saint,

and loved as a child, the "airy fairy" being in whose championship his wife had so zealously engaged. He took upon himself the charge of her pecuniary affairs; and she sought his counsel, and claimed his compassion, in her many cares and anxieties. Like many another who has formed the delight of society, she suffered in the season of reaction from an irresistible sense of depression. These fits of melancholy caused her acute shame, and sorrow, but she expressed her hope, that they might "come into the number of those faults which she could not help."

Not that all her troubles were imaginary. Her present position was deeply painful to her. Godolphin's frequent absences caused her constant anxiety. And such was the state of his circumstances that an immediate marriage was impossible for them. Doubts, too, began to suggest themselves to her mind. Her object in uniting her fate to his was that they might both serve God better. And could not that end, she now began seriously to inquire, be attained more certainly in single than in married life? In the midst of these perplexities she asked permission of the Queen to retire from her service. Her request was reluctantly assented to. And she quitted the Court amidst the lamentations and regrets of those, whom her example had edified, and her graces charmed. Her little oratory, which she had adorned with taste, and hallowed with

"——the balmy air
Of her well-perfumed prayer,"

H

she left to her friends, the Howards. Then, in a sort of ecstasy, she entered Berkeley House, a magnificent mansion, occupied by Lord Berkeley of Stratton, whose family was allied to that of the Godolphins. Here, in an apartment assigned her, she arranged her library, and consecrated her oratory with thanksgiving. Then "she sat down and admired her sweet felicity." But, though cheated with the semblance of solitude and silence, she found that "we about us Babel bear." She was not out of reach of worldly claims, nor out of hearing of worldly converse. And worse than these were the conflicting claims and contending voices, which she acknowledged within the sanctuary of her own heart. That, which in moments of rapture had hitherto been regarded as a costly free-will offering, began now to wear the aspect of a dread yet imperative duty. The world she had gladly renounced that she might be free to wait upon her Lord. But must not the best affections of her heart be resigned, if she would sit at His feet and hear His Word? In this state of indecision she formed a thousand plans. Now she resolved on going into Yorkshire to visit her sister, Lady Yarmouth. Again, she determined on retiring to Hereford, there to reside under the direction of her friend and counsellor, Dr. Benson.

But after a time she relinquished this idea also; and commissioned Evelyn to take a small house for her at Greenwich, where she might be in the midst of her friends, and yet withdrawn from

the importunities of the world. The summer she spent at the delightful country house of her friend, Lady Berkeley, Twickenham Park—that charming spot, where “large browed Verulam” had mused in other years, and Dr. Donne had paid poetical compliments to the Countess of Bedford, whose taste and skill in gardening won praise even from Sir William Temple. Here she enjoyed an interval of tranquillity, and on quitting it accepted an invitation to Sayes Court, where her “little cell” was prepared for her reception. But against this Lady Berkeley protested, insisting on retaining her as her guest in London during the approaching winter; and her scheme of living at Greenwich seems to have been finally abandoned. Whilst still an inmate of Berkeley House, in November, 1674, Margaret Blagge was again summoned to assist at a Court pageant. The part of Diana was assigned to her in “Calisto,” a pastoral, in which the Princesses Mary and Anne, with other “shining beauties” of the Court, appeared. The prologue was spoken by Lady Henrietta Wentworth, and the Duke of Monmouth appeared in the interlude.

To oppose herself to the commands of royalty was, of course, impossible; but it was with unfeigned distress and many tears that Margaret Blagge complied with them. Little did those, who pressed to witness her performance, divine that the object of their admiration, whom they beheld beaming with beauty and intelligence, radiant with jewels and costly apparel, had, ere thus appearing, asked the

prayers of a friend that she might patiently endure "this cloudy weather." Immediately on the conclusion of the entertainment, we are told, "without complimenting a creature, or trifling with the rest who stayed the collation and refreshment that had been prepared, away she slipped, like a spirit, to Berkeley House, and to her little oratory." There she could breathe freely again, and find repose for her wearied spirit. On the repetition of this penance, to her other annoyances was added the loss of a valuable jewel, lent to her by the Countess of Suffolk; the jewellery with which her dress was adorned being valued at nearly twenty thousand pounds.

The spring brought Godolphin back to England, and then occurred that mysterious episode in their history of which no adequate explanation has been offered. In the month of May, on Ascension Day, they were privately married in the Temple Church, by Dr. Lake, in presence only of Lady Berkeley, (who was aunt to Godolphin,) and a servant of the bride. Why their marriage should have been kept such a profound secret does not appear. But none of their friends were made acquainted with it, not even Evelyn, though such reserve was hardly compatible with the compact of friendship that existed between him and Mrs. Godolphin. Not a hint of it did she breathe when on a visit at Sayes Court in the month succeeding her marriage. But she then announced her intention of going to Paris, where Lord Berkeley was about to proceed upon a special embassy. This project determined the

Evelyns on gratifying a wish of their son, who was extremely desirous of visiting the Continent: and they, feeling safer in trusting him abroad with such a guide at hand as their friend, now arranged that he should join Lord Berkeley's party. The journey, however, in consequence of Lord Berkeley's illness, was postponed until late in the autumn, when Evelyn accompanied the travellers as far as Dover. Some idea of Mrs. Godolphin's marriage had ere this occurred to him; and he might have expected her at such a moment to confide to him her secret. But, on the contrary, though she parted from him with emotion, her language was such as entirely to dispel the suspicions that had been aroused in his mind. It can only be conjectured, that it was in compliance with her husband's wishes that she approached so nearly to equivocation on this occasion. That she had a very strict sense of honour, when confidence was reposed in her, Evelyn has testified. "A secret," he says, "was indeed a secret when committed to her; nothing in the world could unlock her bosom, or slack her resolution." Whilst in Paris she lived in strict retirement, from which even the wishes of Louis XIV, to whom the fame of her wit and beauty had extended, could not withdraw her. A visit to a nunnery was the only one of the sights of Paris that could tempt her from her seclusion. And she appeared to regard "these holy institutions" with a tender regret that to herself their shelter was denied, in a way that was not quite flattering to Mr. Godolphin. Her life was

still clouded. "One thing I must tell you, friend," she wrote to Evelyn, "people can have the spleen here in Paris, let them say what they will of the air; but if arithmetic will cure it, I am going with my charge, your son, to be a very hard student, and we intend to be very wise." The course of arithmetic did not effect her cure. A few months afterwards she again wrote, complaining of the unsatisfactory style of life to which she was obliged to conform. Cards and conversation ("prate," Mrs. Godolphin contemptuously termed it) took up all the day, and half the night. Four hours daily she was obliged to spend at the card-table; though her punctual observance of the hours of public worship enabled her to obtain some respite. Her acquaintance with the French language also caused her to be often required to act as interpreter between Lady Berkeley and her guests. Hence arose many an ill-timed interruption to her graver pursuits. Another vexation, to which she only slightly alluded, was, that she found herself entirely superseded in Lady Berkeley's friendship by a lady of disposition more congenial to her own. This was Lady Hamilton, "the sprightly Miss Jennings," to whose exploits reference has before been made. Long afterwards, as Tyrconnel's widow, she was reduced to such poverty as to be obliged to seek a scanty livelihood by working as a milliner in the New Exchange in the Strand. She was known there, from the white mask and dress that she wore, as the "white widow." But her real name and condition

having transpired, she was otherwise provided for by her friends. At this time, however, she was at the height of her beauty and gaiety, and much in the good graces of the Berkeley family.

All conspired to render Mrs. Godolphin anxious for a return to England, where she arrived in the month of April, 1676. How her departure was deplored by one member, at least, of the circle which she quitted, a letter from young John Evelyn to Sir Richard Browne describes:—"Dear grandfather," he wrote, "I most humbly thank you for your kind letter. It came to me just before my pretty, pious, pearly governess left me; whose departure makes this place cease to be either Athens, or anything else but a very melancholy abode to me: now my Minerva is gone I am as desolate as the owl that used to sit on her temple, and almost in as great a passion as Achilles for the loss of Briseis; I could, methinks, look very *υπόδρα* on her Agamemnon, and can hardly forbear drawing on him at this distance." It was well that the Channel divided Mr. Godolphin from this fiery young rival; with whose father his wife had now to make her peace. The secret of her marriage had already transpired. But after some tender reproaches on Evelyn's part, and some very keen self-condemnation on hers, to the honour of their friendship it is told, that an act of oblivion was passed, as regarded this very doubtful passage in it. And all being thus cleared up between them, Evelyn interested himself as much as ever in the affairs of his friend.

He obtained for her from the Queen the renewal of a lease of some lands, granted to her mother by Henrietta Maria ; and superintended, *con amore*, the rebuilding and furnishing of a pretty house, or rather a set of apartments, lately taken by Mr. Godolphin in Scotland Yard. It may be, that it was for the adorning of this abode that Mrs. Godolphin accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn to Blackwall to inspect some Indian curiosities. It was then a favourite amusement of the ladies, to visit the India ships on their arrival in the river, for the purpose of making purchases on board. Mrs. Godolphin was at this time staying with her friends at Deptford, whilst her husband was in attendance on the King at Newmarket. On quitting Sayes Court, she also removed from Berkeley House, where she had hitherto resided, to her own home. With her friends, the Howards, who were now married, the one to Sir Gabriel Silvius, and the other to Colonel Graham, she kept the second anniversary of her marriage at Sayes Court. But her name occurs rarely in the diary of her friend. Of her domestic arrangements he expresses great admiration ; though such engagements could not have been especially congenial to one of her disposition and habits. But the secret of her success is evident. In whatever circumstances she was placed, she studied what was the work God gave her to do therein, and to that applied herself. She had made religion lovely and honourable in circles where it was rejected and despised. And

now she raised lowly duties into acts of holiness, "making that a delight which others look on as a burden."

"Nothing," Evelyn avers, "was more easy, methodical, and quiet, without singularity or affectation; nothing more decent and honourable than the order of her family." She provided her servants with "books to read, prayers to use by themselves, and constantly instructed them herself in the principles of religion; took care for their due receiving of the Holy Sacrament, and was, in a word, the best mistress in the world."

From mere visits of ceremony she held herself excused. And one who conceives of life as "too short for mean anxieties" may be pardoned for holding it too brief to be devoted to yet poorer purposes. But the just claims of society she was ever ready to acknowledge. The sweetness of her disposition, and its natural cheerfulness, rendered her a charming acquisition wherever she appeared. She had "a thousand harmless and ingenious purposes to recreate old and melancholy persons, and divert younger. She had kindness and goodnature to sit by the sick and peevish, read and pray by them with insuperable patience and cheerfulness, and comply with little children. Indeed, there was nothing proof against the abundance of her wit and piety: she made virtue and holiness a cheerful thing, lovely as herself."

She had formerly resolved that, if she remained unmarried, she would be "no more idle than if she

were a wife." Now, she would abate none of the devotion which she had observed in her maiden days. Her charity, indeed, she was able greatly to enlarge, for her husband placed at her disposal all her own fortune, which amounted to about £4000. Evelyn, who had long been her almoner, (as he was also Lady Mordaunt's,) still continued in that office. A poor widow, to whom she had been directed by a mysterious voice, was also engaged by her to search out objects for her charity in prisons and hospitals. These she herself frequently visited; and she often accompanied her assistant to remote and neglected districts of the town to bear relief to the persons thus brought before her notice. Sometimes, to conceal her alms from others, or when the weather was such that she was unwilling to expose a servant to its inclemency, she would pay these visits alone. She had a long list of pensioners who received from her a weekly allowance, or whose house-rent she paid. She kept many children at school, and apprenticed others out to different trades.

She adopted, as her own, an orphan child, on whom she bestowed even more than a mother's care; for she rendered to it all those little offices of attendance commonly deputed to servants. A child of her own was, she said, the only blessing wanting to fill her cup to overflowing. But with the hope that this crowning gift would be accorded her, came a persuasion that it was soon to be resigned. Presentiments of an early death had long

possessed her mind. Dreams and omens were not wanting to confirm the impression. In the portrait which she had some years before presented to Evelyn, she had directed that a sepulchral urn should be introduced. He, too, though little dreaming that his words would be verified, often jestingly told her that he would write her life.

A friend finding her in tears, she explained to her that she had been drawing up a paper containing her last requests to her husband in case of her death. She then spoke of the "great comfort and satisfaction it was to her, that she had put her little concerns in order, and otherwise made preparations against all surprise," adding that she was perfectly resigned.

On the fourth of August, Lady Mordaunt and Mrs. Evelyn, going by appointment to dine with her, she told them she had been reading and sorting her papers and letters; and "how," said she, "is it possible to think of one's friends that we are to leave behind without concernment?"

The birth of a son early in the following month dispelled for a while these gloomy previsions. "I hope you have given thanks to God for His infinite mercy to me," were her first words to Evelyn, when he was admitted by Lady Silvius "to see and bless that lovely babe by the mother's side." The child was two days afterwards baptized by the name of Francis, and the Evelyns, who had remained until after the christening, returned home full of joy and satisfaction. But their joy was soon turned

into heaviness. On Sunday, whilst they were in church, a letter from Mr. Godolphin, written the night before, was brought to them:—"My poor wife," he wrote, "is fallen very ill of a fever with lightness in her head. You know who says the prayer of the faithful shall save the sick; I humbly beg your charitable prayers for this poor creature and your distracted servant."

The prayer of faith was answered; but answered by what to human eyes seemed a denial. They asked life for her, and He gave her a long life—even for ever and ever. The Evelyns hastened to town immediately on receiving the first intimation of her danger, and left her no more till on the ninth of September, 1678, her sufferings were closed; and she, being in a short time made perfect, departed hence in the twenty-fifth year of her age. "Her husband with unspeakable affliction fell down as dead;" and upon Evelyn devolved all the care of the funeral arrangements. He found a letter addressed by Mrs. Godolphin to her husband, to be opened in case of her death. In this she requested that she might be laid in the burying-place of his family, at Godolphin in Cornwall. Thither she had often turned her eyes, as to a safe haven, to which she might retreat from the turmoils of a world that was so ill-suited to her. And there Evelyn accompanied his friend upon the mournful pilgrimage, which, in compliance with her wishes, he now performed. On their return he looked over with him the papers, of which Mrs. Godolphin had left a large collection. She

had, in expectation of her death, put all her affairs in the most perfect order. ' She recommended her servants to her husband, and left legacies to them all ; as well as to many of her poor pensioners. How she was bewailed by those to whom she had been so great a benefactress may be well believed. Even over the thoughtless society of the Court the tidings of her death shed a transitory gloom. But the Evelyns, by whom she had been so valued and so beloved, long and deeply mourned her loss. To them during the early years of childhood Mr. Godolphin committed his motherless boy ; and through life their friendship remained firm and unalterable.

The Memoir of Mrs. Godolphin, drawn up by Evelyn, and addressed to Lady Silvius, is named by him among the things which he would " reform if he had the leisure." But it is probable that there were some circumstances in her story, which made him hesitate in publishing it during the life-time of her husband and other parties. This seems the more likely as the MS. is described as having been written with extraordinary care and neatness ; and in this form it may have been privately circulated.

In the year 1847 it was, however, edited and published by the present Bishop of Oxford, to whom it had been entrusted by a descendant of Mr. Evelyn, the late Archbishop of York. Whatever its literary merits, its interest can hardly be over-rated, when regarded as a record of exalted saintliness, sustained amidst circumstances and in scenes

most adverse to its growth. The character of Mrs. Godolphin rises even into an example of Christian heroism, opposing as it did the evil influences of those times; when, according to the indignant denunciations of a contemporary, "all wisdom, and virtue, and religion, were almost in all places grown ridiculous: when the serious use of reason was become (in vulgar opinion) the most impertinent and insignificant thing in the world: and when innocence was reputed a mere defect of wit and weakness of judgment."

It was in such a state of society, and in the Court that was the very centre and main-spring of its corruption, that she endured, as *The Three Children* in the palace of the Babylonian king, a sorer trial than in the flames of the burning fiery furnace.





VII.

Mary Evelyn—Her education and accomplishments—Attachment to home—Visit to Lady Falkland—Death from small-pox—Mrs. Evelyn's letter—Death of another daughter—Marriage of the surviving one—Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn remove to Wotton—Their mode of life there—Sayes Court becomes the residence of the Czar—Death of Mr. Evelyn's son and brother—He succeeds to Wotton—His death—His widow's testimony and death.

IN reading a series of biographies we are often painfully struck by the succession of heavy trials and bereavements that have befallen the subjects of them ; whilst we miss the intervals of repose and the seasons of refreshing. The uninterrupted course of a prosperous existence fails in its calm monotony to win the eye or gain the ear. But, encountered by some stern calamity, the floods lift up their voice ; attention is arrested, and the long lapse of peace is forgotten in the sudden tumult of the strife.

Evelyn's " Diary " is the record of a life blessed with an unaccustomed amount of felicity. Yet how many a page is inscribed with lamentation, and how many lines are blotted with the writer's tears ! We left him mourning over the early death of one who

had endeared herself to him and his family; yet her loss had not broken his home circle, which was still the centre of much gladness and innocent pleasure. She had passed away, but the garden bloomed as brightly, the improvements that he was ever designing in his house went on as diligently as ever; whilst, blooming as the blossoms, polished as the corner-stones, a youthful group was growing up around him, and the voice of joy and health resounded in their home. Mrs. Evelyn in a few lines thus sketches their life:—"We have our workmen still, but hope a little time will finish all. Your brother watches and prays still. Jack studies and ruminates; the girls make a noise; and I lend a little of my time to any one that seems to want it. How well I pass the hours in which I am not serviceable to others, I am no good judge."

In the Easter succeeding the death of Mrs. Godolphin, Evelyn has recorded his eldest daughter's receiving her first communion. Given to them after the birth of six sons, of whom only one survived, and born in the darksome days of the great plague, she was especially endeared to her parents. She had first drawn breath in the sweet air of her father's native place, Wotton, and to him, at least, she filled up the void left by the loss of his eldest son. To a graceful figure, a voice of remarkable melody, and a countenance of much sweetness, Mary Evelyn united many mental gifts. These received the most careful culture both from instructions at home, and from those of the best masters. She was skilled in

modern languages; danced gracefully; excelled in music; and recited (now an obsolete accomplishment) with ease and animation. But her chief delight was in books; her happiest moments were those which she passed in her father's study—that “new little cell and cabinet, built towards the south court, at the east end of the parlour,” where Dryden came to pay him a visit when he first took possession of it on one of the anniversaries of his wedding-day. There she would willingly have passed her time, turning over the stores of learning to be found there, and aiding her father in some of his lighter labours. “She had read abundance of history, and all the best poets, even Terence, Plautus, Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid; all the best romances and modern poems.” Yet deeper themes were not untouched by her; and to her father she would open the speculations that employed sometimes too deeply her expanding mind. Often they engaged in united prayer; and their seasons of relaxation were shared together.

The *Mundus Muliebris*, a satire on ladies of fashion, published in 1690, appears to have been partly, if not entirely, her composition. The introduction probably was the father's; the poem, and glossary of terms, or “Fop-Dictionary” as it is entitled, at the conclusion, the daughter's. In it is described the toilette of a lady of fashion; and adventurous youths, meditating matrimony, were warned of all the expense which they would be expected to incur. After an elaborate description of the point, and brocade,

she would often spend whole days in prayer and other religious exercises. She earnestly besought her father to recommend her some divine as her ghostly counsellor ; but to this he demurred, fearing to subject her to the enfeebling and depressing influence of a scrupulous conscience, to which her natural disposition already predisposed her.

Whilst still a child she was permitted to spend a summer at Windsor with Lady Tuke, who was now a widow, and had been made woman of the bed-chamber to Catherine of Braganza. Young as she was, Mary Evelyn then saw enough of Court life to shrink from its contact, and to prize at its true value her peaceful and holy home, with its treasure of faithful and loving hearts. Her brother resided at Sayes Court with his young wife, Mrs. Martha Spencer, whom Evelyn describes as " an excellent wife, and a most dutiful and discreet daughter-in-law." Their children were born there ; and it was not until after the birth of his second great-grand-child that Sir Richard Browne went to his rest. He left a memorial of himself at Deptford in an almshouse, founded by him for sailors' widows, in which work of mercy his daughter's name was joined with his own.

The narrow limits of the " poor but quiet villa," whose freedom Evelyn, with somewhat ostentatious humility, used to contrast with the gilded prison that held many of his friends, was deemed, however, far too obscure a station for the beauty and wit of his eldest daughter by the great ladies of her acquaint-

tance. By them it was determined that Mary Evelyn should come forth from her modest retreat—

“Suffer herself to be admired,”

and shine amongst the beauties of the Court. Lady Clarendon and Lady Rochester were resolved on having her appointed one of the maids of honour to the Queen on the next vacancy. But their good intentions were not seconded by the wishes of their favourite; for she set her heart on nothing so much “as the service of God, a quiet and regular life, and how she might improve herself in the most necessary accomplishments, and to which she was arrived at so great a measure.” In this purpose we cannot doubt she was strengthened by the recollection of Mrs. Godolphin’s experience. But Lady Falkland, who, on her husband’s appointment as Treasurer of the Navy, became a neighbour of the Evelyns, was inspired with so violent a friendship for their sweet daughter, that she insisted on carrying her off with her to London in the autumn of 1683. She, however, speedily wearied of the gaieties of the town, and steadily refused to appear at Court unless accompanied by her father or mother. Yet her parents, lured by the advantages she was deriving from the music-lessons of Signor Pietro, were, in spite of her entreaties to return home, induced to spare her through the winter to her friend. For this act of self-denial her father held himself rewarded by the applause that greeted her when at Lord

Arundel's she delighted not only the general company, but even professors of music, by her exquisite singing. Her countenance, which was always composed into an expression of great sweetness when she sang, became this evening even angelic in its beauty. That sunset-gleam lingered long afterwards as a bitter-sweet memory in the hearts of those, who so lavishly flung away the treasure of those last months in which she yet was spared to them.

Towards the end of February she was permitted to return to her home. But when she folded her weary wing at last beneath the safe shelter for which all the winter she had longed, the shadow of death was on her eyelids. Just before quitting London she had with Lady Falkland paid a visit to a friend, who, in the course of conversation, mentioned that she had a servant in the house at that time ill with the small-pox. The careless announcement fell upon the heart of her young guest with a weight of terror that proved to be a foreboding of her own fate. Almost immediately on her return home she was seized with the same deadly malady, beneath which she rapidly sunk, and, after a week's suffering, expired, March 14th, 1685, in the nineteenth year of her age. Godolphin is mentioned amongst the mourners who followed her to her grave. Two months later Evelyn entered in his "Diary:"—"Mr. Hussey, a young gentleman, who made love to my late dear child, but whom she could not bring herself to answer in affection, died now of the same cruel disease, for which I was extremely sorry, be-

cause he never enjoyed himself after my daughter's decease, nor was I averse to the match, could she have overcome her disinclination."

However bitterly Mr. Hussey may have bewailed the fate of her whom he so soon joined, to her father her loss was irreparable. In the first passion of his grief he wrote:—"Oh dear, sweet, and desirable child, how shall I part with all this goodness and virtue without the bitterness of sorrow and reluctance of a tender parent! Thy affection, duty, and love to me was that of a friend as well as a child. Nor less dear to thy mother, whose example and tender care of thee was unparalleled, nor was thy return to her less conspicuous. Oh! how she mourns thy loss! how desolate hast thou left us! To the grave shall we both carry thy memory! God alone, (in whose bosom thou art at rest and happy!) give us to resign thee and all our contentments (for thou, indeed, wert all in this world) to His blessed pleasure! Let Him be glorified by our submission, and give us grace to bless Him for the graces He implanted in thee, thy virtuous life, pious and holy death, which is, indeed, the only comfort of our souls, hastening, through the infinite love and mercy of the Lord Jesus, to be shortly with thee, dear child, and with thee and those blessed saints like thee, glorify the Redeemer of the world to all eternity." Her mother, in a calmer but not less tender strain, thus addressed her friend Lady Tuke:—

“ April, 1685.

“ How to express the sorrow for parting with so dear a child is a difficult task. She was welcome to me from the first moment God gave her, acceptable through the whole course of her life by a thousand endearments, by the gifts of nature, by acquired parts, by the tender love she ever showed her father and me : a thread of piety accompanied all her actions, and now proves our greatest consolation. The patience, resignation, humility of her carriage in so severe and fatal a disease discovered more than an ordinary assistance of the Divine goodness, never expressing fear of death, or a desire to live, but for her friends' sake. The seventh day of her illness she discoursed to me in particular as calmly as in health, desired to confess and to receive the blessed Sacrament, which she performed with great devotion ; after which, though in her perfect senses to the last, she never signified the least concern for the world, prayed often, and resigned her soul. What shall I say ! She was too great a blessing for me, who never deserved anything, much less such a jewel. I am too well assured of your Ladyship's kindness to doubt the part you take in this loss : you have ever showed yourself a friend in so many instances, that I presume upon your compassion. What is this world when we recall past things ! what are the charms that keep our minds in suspense ! without the conversation of those we love, what is life worth ! How did I propose happiness this summer in the return of your Ladyship and my dear child—for she was absent almost all this winter !

“ She had much improved herself by the remarks she had made of the world and all its vanities. What shall I add ! I could ever speak of her, and might I be just to her without suspicion of partiality, could tell you many things. The papers which are found in her cabinet discover she profited by her reading—such reflections, collections out of Scripture, confessions, meditations, and

pious notions, evidence her time was not spent in the trifling way of most young women. I acknowledge, as a Christian, I ought not to murmur, and I should be infinitely sorry to incur God's further displeasure. There are those yet remaining that challenge my care, and for their sakes I endeavour to submit all I can. I thank my poor cousin a thousand times for her kind concern, and wish she may live to be the comfort you deserve in her, that God will continue the blessing of both, and make you happy—which is the prayer of her who is

“Yours, most affectionately,

“M. E.”

That the religious resignation and cheerful submission which pervaded this letter were not mere fleeting emotions of the writer, is shown by an anecdote related by Dr. Bohun:—“Mrs. Evelyn,” he states, “has been often heard to say, concerning the death of her admirable and beloved daughter, that though she had lost her for ever in this world yet she would not but that she had been, because many pleasing ideas occur to her thoughts that she had conversed with her so long, and been made happy by her for so many years.” One who can thus thankfully dwell on the memory of past happiness, even when acutely sensible of its loss, must have attained considerable proficiency in the art of Christian contentment.

The same spirit of adoring gratitude under bereavement which animated Mrs. Evelyn, is so beautifully exemplified in a touching epitaph inscribed in a little village church by a contemporary

throne, he was speedily reconciled to the existing state of things, though he was not quite satisfied that his son should accept public employment under the new rulers. His daughter, however, had no reason to regret her father's rejection of Sir Gilbert Gerard's son, whether the embarrassment of his affairs or his want of favour at Court was the cause of it; for her marriage with Mr. Draper, in 1693, was an event fraught with happiness both to herself and all her friends. Her father, on entering her marriage in his "Diary," thus describes her:—"She is a good child, religious, discreet, ingenious, and qualified with all the ornaments of her sex. She has a peculiar talent in design, as painting in oil and miniature, and an extraordinary genius for whatever hands can do with a needle. She has the French tongue, has read most of the Greek and Roman authors, and poets, using her talents with great modesty, exquisitely shaped, and of an agreeable countenance."

Her artistic talents she inherited from her mother; and Ralph Thoresby, writing in 1701, alludes to the accomplishments both of Mrs. Evelyn and her daughter:—

"THE famous Mr. Evelyn," he says, "who published a great number of very rare books, was above measure civil and courteous, in showing me many drawings of his own and his lady's doing; one especially of enamel was surprisingly fine, and this ingenious lady told me the manner in which she wrought it; but I was uneasy at his too great civility in leaving an untold heap of gold

medals before me. He afterwards carried me in his coach to his son Draper's at the Temple, and showed me many curious pieces of his ingenious daughter's performance, both very small in miniature, and as large as the life in oil colours, equal, it is thought, to the greatest masters of the age."

The band of friends and relatives who had thronged the apartments, and trod the mazy gardens of Sayes Court had, as years wore on, been narrowing and changing. The dearest were sleeping in the churchyard hard by. Cowley's song was hushed. Taylor had found a grave in his distant diocese in the west. Robert Boyle and his sister Lady Ranelagh died within a few days of each other. Mrs. Godolphin lay in her lonely resting-place in Cornwall. John Evelyn, the younger, was detained by the duties of his office in Ireland. Mr. and Mrs. Draper, though they spent a part of their time in London, had a house near Croydon, "richly adorned and furnished." And the home, whose limits had formerly been too narrow for its inmates, had now assumed the melancholy aspect of a forsaken nest. The young birds had flown already; the parents did not wait for the later frosts to drive them thence.

Mr. Evelyn of Wotton, was now nearly eighty years of age. He had lost his only son, who died childless. His brother John had thus become his heir, and he invited him to reside with him at Wotton. In compliance with this wish Evelyn and his wife quitted the home, endeared to them by the happiness

which they had enjoyed, and, perhaps, still more by the sorrows which they had shared there for upwards of forty years. They removed from Sayes Court in 1694, leaving the house partially furnished for the occasional use of their daughter and her husband. Eventually, it was let to Admiral Benbow, on condition that he kept up the garden. Of their declining days Evelyn, in a letter written from Wotton to his old friend Dr. Bohun, and dated January 18th, 1697, gives a pleasing picture:—

“HAvING been told that you have lately inquired what is become of your now old friends of Sayes Court, the date hereof will acquaint you where they are, and the sequel much of what they do and think. I believe I need not tell you that, after the marriage of my daughter, and the so kind offer of my good brother here, my then circumstances and times considered, I had reason to embrace it, not merely out of inclination to the place where I was born and have now an interest. * * * I have let my house to Captain Benbow, and have the mortification of seeing every day much of my former labours and expense there impairing, for want of a more polite tenant. My grandson is so delighted in books, that he professes a library is to him the greatest recreation, so I give him free scope here, where I have near upon 22,000, (with my brother's), and whither I would bring the rest had I any room, which I have not, to my great regret; having here so little conversation with the learned, unless it be when Mr. Wotton [Dr. Bentley's friend] comes now and then to visit me, he being tutor to Mr. Finch's son at Albury, but which he is now leaving to go to his living, that without books, and the best wife and brother in the world, I were to be pitied; but, with these subsidiaries, and the revising some of my old impertinencies,

to which I am adding a Discourse I made on Medals (lying by me long before Obadiah Walker's Treatise appeared), I pass some of my Attic nights, if I may be so vain as to name them, with the author of those Criticisms. For the rest, I am planting an evergreen grove here to an old house ready to drop, the economy and hospitality of which my good old brother will not depart from, but *more veterum* kept a Christmas in which we had not fewer than three hundred bumkins every holy-day.

"We have here a very convenient apartment of five rooms together, besides a pretty closet, which we have furnished with the spoils of Sayes Court, and is the raree-show of the whole neighbourhood, and in truth we live easy as to all domestic cares. Wednesday and Saturday nights we call Lecture-nights, when my wife and myself take our turns to read the packets of all the news sent constantly from London, which serves us for discourse till fresh news comes; and so you have the history of a very old man and his no young companion, whose society I have enjoyed more to my satisfaction these three years here, than in almost fifty before; but am now every day trusting to be gone, I hope to a better place. My daughter Draper, being brought to bed in the Christmas-holidays of a fine boy, has given an heir to a most deserving husband, a prudent, well-natured gentleman, a man of business, like to be very rich, and deserving to be so, among the happiest pairs I think in England, and to my daughter's and our own heart's desire. She has also a fine girl, and a mother-in-law exceedingly fond of my daughter, and a most excellent woman, charitable, and of a very sweet disposition. They all live together; keep each their coach, and with as suitable an equipage as any in town."

Still vexations occurred to break the quiet course of their life. Admiral Benbow, early in the year 1698, re-let Sayes Court to the Czar during his visit

to England, an act which entailed yet more vexation on Evelyn than it did loss to himself. Evelyn had timely notice from his servant of this proceeding. He wrote :—" There is a house full of people, and right nasty. The Czar is next your library, and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock and six at night, is very seldom at home a whole day, very often in the King's yard, or by water, dressed in several dresses. The King is expected here this day ; the best parlour is pretty clear for him to be entertained in. The King pays for all he has."

But the fullest account of the depredations, committed by the Czar and his suite during their short sojourn at Deptford, is to be found in the account drawn up by Sir Christopher Wren and others, appointed by the Lords of the Treasury, at the request of Admiral Benbow, to report on the damages committed there. A melancholy spectacle the house and gardens must have presented when disencumbered of their barbarian occupants. Doors were destroyed ; windows broken ; locks damaged ; floors inked ; Dutch tiles cracked. Even the stone paving of the kitchen required to be replaced ; and the iron stoves to be repaired. The fire-irons were invariably broken ; curtains were torn, hangings stained, chairs, tables, and beds spoilt, broken and " damnyfied." A large Turkey carpet, the only one, it would appear, in the house, was damaged, and many articles of furniture had disappeared altogether. Five-and-twenty pictures were torn, and their

frames broken, whilst "several fine draughts and other designs relating to the sea, valued by the Admiral at 50*l.*, were missing."

Chairs and tables could, however, be replaced; tapestry cleaned, and floors laid down again; but the mischief wrought out of doors was irreparable. The pride of Evelyn's heart, the garden, that "exemplar of his book of Forest Trees," lay in ruins. The glorious holly-hedge, indeed, "glittering with its armed and varnished leaves; the taller standards, at orderly distances, blushing with natural coral," opposed its bristling barrier to the Czar's assaults. But the rarer shrubs and clipped yew-hedges, bore dismal traces of his brutal sports; to which, also, the destruction of the three wheelbarrows, mentioned in Sir Christopher Wren's inventory, may be attributed. Mr. London, the King's gardener, who surveyed the grounds at the same time, has left the following account of the injuries inflicted on the garden and grounds, under the two heads of what could be repaired again, and what could not. Under this form it is noted:—

"1. All the grass work is out of order and broke into holes by their leaping and strewing bricks upon it.

"2. The bowling-green is in the same condition.

"3. All that ground which used to be cultivated for eatable plants is overgrown with weeds, and is not manured nor cultivated, by reason the Czar would not suffer any men to work when the season offered.

“ 4. The wall fruit and standard fruit trees are unpruned and unnailed.

“ 5. The hedges nor wilderness are not cut as they ought to be.

“ 6. The gravel walks are all broke into holes and out of order.

“ These observations were made by George London, his Majesty’s Master gardener, and he certifies that to put the gardens and plantations in as good repair as they were in before his Czarrish Majesty resided there, will require the sum of fifty-five pounds, as is justified by me,

“ GEORGE LONDON.

“ Great damages are done to the trees and plants, which cannot be repaired, as the breaking of the branches of the wall-fruit trees, spoiling two or three of the finest true phyllereas, breaking several hollies and other fine plants.”

“ Since all that is not heaven must fade
Light be the hand of ruin laid
Upon the home I love.”

Such is the natural prayer of the heart ; and yet how rarely granted ! How in passing from youth to age we migrate, as it were, into a strange country, and find ourselves amongst an alien race ; ay, though bearing the name and title of the scenes and people amongst whom in early days we dwelt securely, saying, “ I shall never be removed, Thou, Lord, in Thy goodness hast made my hill so strong ! ”

The desolation that had passed over the home of their early days was to the Evelyns but a symbol of heavier bereavements, of which the number was not yet fulfilled. In the preceding autumn their only son had returned from Ireland in impaired health. He came down to Wotton, hoping to be restored by care and good nursing to his accustomed interests and pursuits, and little deeming that he had laid them down for ever. Neither the country air nor his mother's solicitude was of any avail. He lingered only till the close of March, 1699, dying in the forty-fifth year of his age. He appears to have been an accomplished man; and to have shared his father's tastes. He wrote a Greek poem, prefixed to the "*Sylva*," and published a translation of a work on gardens. He was also the translator of the "*Life of Alexander*," in Dryden's edition of Plutarch. His first tutor was Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips. Dr. Bohun, who succeeded him, was presented by Evelyn to the living of Wotton, soon after he himself had succeeded to the estate on the death of his brother, which occurred a few months after that of his son; and now that he, too, had passed away, the lonely pair were left alone in the wide old mansion.

Yet the tears they shed over blessings lost, did not blind them to those that still remained. Their trust and patience were secure against these last assaults of sorrow. For relief from memories that pressed too heavily, they turned to those rural pursuits, that supply each season with fresh interests

and employments. Mrs. Evelyn, as she had formerly embellished her husband's works and cultivated his garden, now shared with him "this most becoming diversion of old age." Whilst he, "like the patriarchs of old, passed his days in the field;" she, with her dairy and distaff, became "a very Sabine." And still she found pleasure in arranging and adorning the home, where their life was closing so peacefully.

One wet and stormy Sunday, when the weather detained them from the parish church, Dr. Bohun preached to them and their domestics at home of the vanity of this world and the felicity of another. He warned them to prepare for the change awaiting them; and Evelyn proffered him his thanks, saying, he took it kindly as his funeral sermon. It was not, however, till nearly a year and a half afterwards that his summons came, and he went down to his grave "as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season." He died in February, 1705, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. His death occurred in his house in London, but he was buried at Wotton, where three years afterwards his wife was laid beside him, according to her wishes, expressed in her will. In it she desired that her coffin might be placed near that of her dear husband, "whose love and friendship," she added, "I was happy in, fifty-eight years, nine months; but by God's providence left a desolate widow, the 27th day of February, 1705, in the 71st year of my age. His care of my education was such as might be-

come a father, a lover, a friend, and husband, for instruction, tenderness, affection, and fidelity to the last moment of his life; which obligation I mention with a gratitude to his memory, ever dear to me; and I must not omit to own the sense I have of my parents' care and goodness, in placing me in such worthy hands."

To the members of a family, the events of whose lives present so few remarkable features, and whose personal characters were more marked by amiability of disposition and cultivation of mind, than by exalted piety or distinguished talents, it may be that too prominent a place has been allotted in these sketches.

But, beside the wide circle of their acquaintance having connected them with some of the most noteworthy personages of their day, the minuteness of detail into which Evelyn in his "Diary" has entered, admits us into a familiarity with the inmates of Sayes Court, hardly to be obtained from more elaborate biographies.

And it is as presenting a pleasing picture of an English home that it is offered in illustration of the domestic life of the seventeenth century. What Mrs. Evelyn's idea of a woman's duty was, and that to which her own practice conformed, she in a few words has told us. She considered "the care of children's education, observing a husband's commands, assisting the sick, relieving the poor, and being serviceable to her friends, of sufficient weight to employ the most improved capacities."

Such was her plan of life, and such the limit of her aspirations. And this arose from no lack of intellectual activity, from no defect of energy of character. We have seen how readily she adapted herself to her husband's plan of a life of learned seclusion; and how courageously she stood by him when the pestilence darkened around them. But she never questioned that in the performance of domestic duties, and in the exercise of domestic affections, her nature would find its highest development. A more extended field of labour, and a loftier scheme of existence are advocated, nay claimed, for women, by many of our contemporaries. To them so narrow a sphere would seem poor and insufficient. Yet it was such as an Apostle, writing for all ages, assigned to women, when he counselled them to be "keepers at home."





HOME-LIFE OF ENGLISH LADIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

LADY WARWICK AND HER NEIGHBOURS.

Lady Mary Boyle's childhood in Ireland—Residence with her father in Dorsetshire—Removal to London—Her own account of her engagement with Mr. Rich—Her private marriage—Lord Warwick's family—Character of Lady Ranelagh—Lady Mary's early married life—Retirement to Lees—Devotion to religion—Mr. Rich becomes Earl of Warwick.

IT would be no easy task to enumerate those of our countrywomen, who in the seventeenth century "obtained a good report" by their piety and good works. But this is often all we know of them. The divines under whose direction they placed themselves, or whose patrons they had been, were expected to pronounce over their tombs the eulogium of their virtues. And it must be owned, that either the partiality of friendship, or the fervour of oratory, often betrayed the preacher into praises that savoured strongly of flattery of the departed. So that we can the better

appreciate the feeling that prompted Lady Frances Hobart to request, that the friend who was to preach her funeral sermon should abstain from all praise of "a vile sinful creature."

Of the personal history of these ladies, however, but scanty details are given. Thus, beyond the holy rule observed in their families, and the deep piety of their daily lives, but little is told us of Lady Maynard and Lady Vere, whose names are in this sketch associated with Lady Warwick's, as neighbours and acquaintances. Of another neighbour, Mrs. Walker, we learn more from the memoir by her husband, who was for many years chaplain in Lady Warwick's family, and afterwards resided at no great distance from Lees Priory. And, in the case of Lady Warwick herself, these deficiencies have been supplied by papers of her own. "Some specialities in the life of M. Warwick," is the title of an autobiography which, though extending nearly to the close of her life, dwells with most minuteness on the recollections of her youth. In her *Journal*, again, we find depicted the earthly trials and heavenly consolations which attended her later days. When Robert Boyle,—“her dear brother Robin,” as she quaintly styled him,—dedicated to her his treatise on “Seraphic Love,” in the preface he thus addressed her:—“It was at that delicious Leeze, where you are now the Mistress, that this letter was written; and it was of you I borrowed those hours that I spent in writing it. ’Twas to you that I showed it almost sheet by sheet,

before I resolved to send it away. 'Tis you that can best excuse the imperfections of it, as knowing not only the more obvious, but the more private avocations, and other disadvantages, amongst which it was penned." He might have added—To you it may with especial propriety be dedicated. For who fitter than yourself to appreciate its theme? How bitterly have not you expiated the brief delirium of youthful passion by a lifetime of dreary regrets! But after having hewn out to yourself cisterns, broken cisterns that could hold no water, and having from these turned aside fainting and athirst, to you it has been given to drink of the water of the river of life freely.

Mary, Countess of Warwick, was the seventh daughter of the first Earl of Cork. Her father, in his "True Remembrances," speaks of her as having been born in 1624; but in her autobiography she gives the year 1625 as the date of her birth. She was early deprived by death of her mother, and was committed to the care of Lady Clayton, who adopted her as her own child, and to whom she was warmly attached. When she was about eleven or twelve years old, her father, having purchased an estate in Dorsetshire, removed with his family into England; and, to her great sorrow, she was withdrawn from the care of her kind guardian, with whom she had hitherto lived in the little country town of Mallow. Many a time must she have longed to be safe again under that sheltering wing; for she was early initiated into the cares of life.

It was not long before a guest appeared at Stalbridge, to whom she was expected to accord a gracious welcome, and who was received by her father with peculiar favour. This was a person whom she describes as "Mr. Hambleton, son to my Lord Clandeboyes, who was afterwards Earl of Clanbrassel." She had, it appears, been contracted to him in her childhood, by her father, who now received him as his son-in-law. But as Mr. Hamilton, in the year 1635, is said to have married a daughter of the Earl of Monmouth,* who survived him; and Lady Warwick speaks of herself as being at this time about thirteen or fourteen years of age, it is impossible to reconcile the two statements. Some suitor, undoubtedly, she had, favoured by her father, but whom she could never be persuaded to regard but with the utmost aversion. When looking back on this passage of life in maturer years, after she had known deep disappointment and severe sorrow, she scarcely allowed these later trials to surpass in bitterness what she was then called on to endure. Her father was firm in his purpose, she as resolute in her opposition to it. Not gentle means only were employed to bend her to his will; and still the strife was high between them, when an accession of guests, arriving at Stal-

* Hermione, whose "cold usage, curing the fever her scorching eyes had given," drew from Robert Boyle the treatise on "Seraphic Love," before alluded to, was, Evelyn tells us, "the beautiful and ingenious daughter of Carew, Earl of Monmouth."

bridge in the autumn of 1638, produced a timely diversion in her favour. Lord Cork, if disappointed by his daughter, had a son, who was more amenable to his wishes. Sir Thomas Stafford, gentleman usher to the Queen, came with his wife on a visit to his old friend, and before its conclusion a marriage was arranged between the Earl's third son, Francis, afterwards Lord Shannon, and a daughter of Lady Stafford by her first husband, Sir Robert Killigrew.

In consequence of this, the whole family removed to London, where they occupied apartments of Sir Thomas Stafford in the Savoy. Two elder daughters of Lord Cork, the Countess of Barrimore and Lady Ranelagh, with their husbands and children, lodged in some of the adjacent houses, but took their meals at their father's table. Here a new life opened upon Lady Mary Boyle, for which her sober education under Lady Clayton had hardly prepared her. The few intervening years spent by her at Stalbridge, where the household was submitted to a rigid rule, afforded scarcely fitter training. In London the old Earl lived in the most lavish and expensive style, and his house was frequented by crowds of company, by whom his young daughter was courted and flattered. But none of her new acquaintance exercised over her so great an influence as Elizabeth Killigrew, a beautiful, light-hearted girl, who, towards the end of October, was married at Whitehall to Francis Boyle. A few days afterwards he quitted England for the

Continent with his younger brother Robert; when his bride was received into the family of her father-in-law. She and Lady Mary became inseparable friends, sharing the same room, the same amusements, and the same pursuits: though, it must be owned, their gravest occupations were the toilet and the theatre, their severest studies the reading of Romances. They were more nearly of an age than the other daughters of the family, who were all at this time married; the youngest, Lady Margaret, having died early. Lady Ranelagh was ten years older than Lady Mary, to whom she was next in age, except Lady Loftus, from whom she was, through circumstances, almost entirely estranged.

By her new sister Lady Mary was inspired with an ardent desire to taste the pleasures, and share in the fatigues, of a court life. By her, too, she was introduced to many of the young gallants with whom she had been acquainted whilst in attendance on the Queen; and who now paid homage to the bride at the Savoy. Amongst them was Charles Rich, second son of the Earl of Warwick, who, however, sought the fair lady's society, not so much for her own sake as on account of her being the *confidante* of Mrs. Harrison, maid of honour to the Queen, at whose feet he sighed hopelessly; for Thomas Howard, son of the Earl of Berkshire, rivalled him in her good graces. Young, gay, and handsome, Mr. Rich soon found himself on terms of easy intimacy with Lord Cork's family; where he paid daily visits. And Lady Mary, persecuted

by Mr. Hamilton, and provoked, though rather flattered, by the admiration of other suitors, who were prompted by the report of the large fortune her father intended giving her, turned for relief to the charming manners and agreeable conversation of Mr. Rich, who added to all his charms that he did not want her to marry him. For she was now "living so much at ease, that she was unwilling," she tells us, "to change her condition."

A cloud was slowly rising on the edge of that sunny sky. What could have induced her brother, Broghill, afterwards Lord Orrery, to lose his heart to that fair, but fickle maid of honour, Mrs. Harrison? He did so, and was challenged accordingly by Mr. Howard; whilst Mr. Rich, sacrificing his jealousy to his friendship, brought the challenge, and himself acted as second in the duel. It was not followed by any serious consequences. But for this magnanimous act he deemed it expedient for a while to absent himself from the Savoy. This may account for Lord Cork being able, when relating this affair to his son's tutor, to add:—"I think in my next I shall advise you that my daughter Mary is nobly married, and that in the spring I shall send her husband to keep company with my sons in Geneva." But whatever hopes Lord Cork may have formed of his daughter's yielding to his wishes, they were doomed to be rudely crushed. About this time Mr. Hamilton (or whoever that falsely named one may have been) received his final dismissal. It may have some-

what comforted the father to find that his daughter had right on her side, as far at least as worldly prudence—the only motive that could have induced her to obey him—was concerned. For her disagreeable and persevering lover was reduced in the course of the next year to absolute penury by the Irish Rebellion.

Beautiful Mrs. Harrison was destined to work yet more mischief in Lord Cork's family. After his consent to her marriage with his son had with difficulty been won from him, nay, after the grave business of choosing her *trousseau* had been completed, the lady wavered in her sentiments, faltered in her allegiance, and finally returned to her first love, Mr. Howard; though she was not married to him for some time afterwards. The rest of the story must be related in Lady Warwick's own words, as it is the passage of her life upon which she enters more fully and circumstantially than any other:—

“ Mr brother, being thus happily disengaged from that amour, brought again Mr. Rich to our family, and soon after he grew again as great among us, as if he had never done that disobliging action* to us. By this time, upon what account I know not, he began to withdraw his visits to Mrs. Harrison, and his heart, too; and being encouraged in his resolution by my sister Boyle, began to think of making an address to me, she promising him all the assistance her power with me could give him to gain my affection, though she knew by attempting it she should

* Acting as second to Mr. Howard in the duel.

lose my father's and all my family, that she believed would never be brought to consent to my having any younger brother; my father's kindness to me making him, as she well knew, resolved to match me to a great fortune. At last, one day she began to acquaint me with Mr. Rich's, as she said, great passion for me; at which I was at the first much surprised, both at his having it for me, and at her telling it to me, knowing how much she hazarded by it, if I should acquaint my father with it. I confess I did not find his declaration of his kindness disagreeable to me, but the consideration of his being but a younger brother made me sadly apprehend my father's displeasure, if I should embrace any such offer, and so resolved, at that time, to give her no answer, but seemed to disbelieve his loving me at the rate she informed me he did, though I had for some time taken notice of his loving me, though I never thought he designed trying to gain me.

"After this declaration of his esteem for me by my sister, he became a most diligent gallant to me, seeking by a most humble and respectful address to gain my heart, applying himself when there was no other beholders in the room but my sister, to me; but, if any other person came in, he took no more than ordinary notice of me; but, to disguise his design, addressed himself much to her; and though his doing so was not well liked in our family, yet there was nothing said to him about their dislike of it; and by this way his design became unsuspected, and thus we lived for some months; in which time, by his more than ordinary humble behaviour to me, he did insensibly steal away my heart, and got a greater possession of it than I knew he had. My sister, when he was forced to be absent for fear of observing eyes, would so plead for him, that it worked, too, very much upon me. When I began to find, myself, that my kindness for him grew and increased so much, that though I had, in the time of his private address to me, many great and advantageous offers made me by my fa-

ther, and that I could not with any patience endure to hear of any of them, I began with some seriousness to consider what I was engaging myself in by my kindness for Mr. Rich; for my father, I knew, would never endure me, and besides I considered my mind was too high, and I too expensively brought-up, to bring myself to live contentedly with Mr. Rich's fortune, who would never have, when his father was dead, above thirteen or fourteen hundred pounds a-year. Upon these considerations I was convinced that it was time for me to give him a flat and final denial; and with this, as I thought, fixed resolution, I have laid me down in my bed, to beg my sister, never to name him to me more for a husband, and to tell him, from me, that I desired him never more to think of me, for I was resolved not to anger my father: but, when I was upon a readiness to open my mouth to utter these words, my great kindness for him stopped it, and made me rise always without doing it, though I frequently resolved it; which convinced to me the great and full possession he had of my heart, which made me begin to give him more hopes of gaining me than before I had done, by any thing but my inducing him to come to me after he had declared to me his design in doing so, which he well knew I would never endure from any other persons that had offered themselves to me.

“ Thus we lived for some considerable time, my duty and my reason having frequent combats within me with my passion, which at last was always victorious, though my fear of my father's displeasure frightened me from directly owning it to Mr. Rich; till my sister Boyle's taking sick of the measles (and by my lying with her when she had them, though I thought at first it might be the small-pox), I got them of her, my kindness being then so great for her, that though of all diseases the small-pox was that I most apprehended, yet from her I did not anything, and would have continued with her all her illness, had I not by my father's absolute command been separated into another room from her; but it was

too late, for I had got from her the infection, and presently fell most dangerously ill of the measles, too; and, before they came out, I was removed into another house, because my sister Dungarvan;* in whose house I was, in Long Acre, was expecting daily to be delivered, and was apprehensive of that distemper. Mr. Rich then was much concerned for me, and his being so, made him make frequent visits to me, though my sister Boyle was absent from me, and was most obligingly careful of me; which as it did to a great degree heighten my passion for him, so it did also begin to make my family and before-suspecting friends, to see that they were by a false disguise of his kindness to my sister abused, and that he had for me, and I for him, a respect which they feared was too far gone.

“ This made my old Lady Staford, mother to my sister Boyle, (who was a cunning old woman, and who had been herself too much and too long versed in amours,) begin to conclude the truth, and absolutely to believe that her daughter was the great actor in this business, and that her being confidant with us, would ruin her with my father; and, therefore, having some power with him, to prevent the inconveniences that would come to her daughter, resolved to acquaint my father with Mr. Rich’s visiting me when I had the measles, and of his continuing to do so at the Savoy,—whither I was after my recovery, by my father’s order, removed, and where, by reason of my being newly recovered of an infectious disease, I was free from any visits. After she had with great rage chid her daughter, and threatened her that she would acquaint my father with it (to keep me, as she said, from ruining myself), she accordingly, in a great heat and passion, did that very night do it. My sister presently acquainted both Mr. Rich and me with her mother’s resolution, and, when she had Mr. Rich alone, told him, if he did not that

* Her eldest brother’s wife.

very night prevail with me to declare my kindness for him, and to give him some assurance of my resolution to have him, I would certainly the next day by my father be secured from his ever speaking to me, and so he would quite lose me. This discourse did make him resolve to do what she counselled him to; and that very night, when I was ill and laid upon my bed, she giving him an opportunity of being alone with me, and by her care keeping anybody from disturbing us; he had with me about two hours' discourse, upon his knees, by my bed-side, wherein he did so handsomely express his passion (he was pleased to say he had for me), and his fear of being by my father's command separated from me, that together with as many promises as any person in the world could make, of his endeavouring to make up to me the smallness of his fortune by the kindness he would still have to me, if I consented to be his wife; that though I can truly say, that when he kneeled down by me I was far from having resolved to own I would have him, yet his discourse so far prevailed that I consented to give him, as he desired, leave to let his father mention it to mine; and promised him that, let him make his father say what he pleased, I would own it.

"Thus we parted this evening, after I had given away myself to him, and if I had not done so that night, I had been, by my father's separating us, kept from doing it, at least for a long time; for in the morning my father, upon what the night before had been told him by my Lady Staford, came early to me, and with a very frowning and displeasing look, bid me go (as I had before asked to do) into the country to air myself, at a little house near Hampton Court, which Mrs. Katheren Kilegrew, sister to my sister Boyle, then had; and told me he was informed I had young men who visited me, and commanded me if any did so, where I was now going, I should not see them. This he said in general, but named not Mr. Rich in particular, which I was glad of; and so after my father had dismissed me with this unkind look (and, I thought,

severe command), I was presently, by my brother Broghill in his coach, conveyed to a very little house in Hampton, which was at that time, though, much more agreeable to me than the greatest and most stately one could be, because it did remove me from my father some distance, which I thought best for me, till his fury was in some measure over, which I much apprehended."

During her exile at Hampton, mediation was attempted with her father on her behalf. Lord Goring, whose eldest son was married to her sister Letitia, was engaged to plead Mr. Rich's cause; but though Lord Cork was even moved to tears by his eloquence, he was inexorable in his opposition to the marriage; and, after a visit from Lord Warwick and Lord Holland, sent two of his sons to acquaint his daughter with his decision. Warned by Mr. Rich of their intended visit and its purpose, she was ready armed with the determination of never renouncing him; and to all their exhortations and threats, "I made," she says, "this resolute but ill and horribly disobedient answer, that I did acknowledge a very great and particular kindness for Mr. Rich, and desired them, with my humble duty to my father, to assure him that I would not marry him without his consent, but that I was resolved not to marry any other person in the world; and that I hoped my father would be pleased to consent to my having Mr. Rich, to whom, I was sure, he could have no other objection, but that he was a younger brother; for he was descended from a very great and honourable family, and was in the

opinion of all (as well as mine) a very deserving person, and I desired my father would be pleased to consider, I only should suffer by the smallness of his fortune, which I very contentedly chose to do, and should judge myself to be much more happy with his small one, than with the greatest without him."

Lord Cork, indignant at her reply, and the more so, perhaps, because it was not altogether unreasonable, forbade her his presence, and she remained entirely separated from her own family for many succeeding weeks. She was consoled, however, in her solitude by daily visits from Mr. Rich; until her father was wearied into consenting to their marriage, though her portion, which he had intended to be a very large one, was reduced to £7000. And after sundry tears, intercessions, and genuflections, he consented to receive her again into his favour. She did not, however, take much care to retain it, as, simply from dislike to a public wedding, she was privately married, without her father's knowledge, at Shepperton, in July, 1641.

It must be allowed that the condemnation, which in after-life she passed upon some of the passages of her youth, does not appear so overstrained as the remorse of many devout diarists. For they, unfolding to careless eyes a page that God had mercifully sealed, written, like the roll of the prophet, with lamentation, and mourning, and woe, have presented to the world the painful picture of a life hopelessly and unaccountably darkened, whilst they

have necessarily failed in imparting to their readers any, the faintest impression of the secret peace that possessed their souls, since it passeth all understanding.

That Lady Mary was a light-hearted, careless, self-willed girl, living in and for the present hour, nay, more than this, that her spirit was imbued with a deep taint of worldliness, is apparent not only from her self-accusations, but from many passing hints. But it is also evident that she possessed a force of character, that, under right guidance, would render her capable of attaining the very highest excellence. That guidance was not withheld. Her way was hedged up with thorns, even when walking in paths of her own choosing, and so she was "compelled to come in." After the life of pleasure she had led, whilst residing with her father in the Savoy, the strict religious rule observed in her husband's family was sufficiently irksome. Yet, though it did not engage her affections, it compelled her reverence. She felt there was a more excellent way than any she had yet known; but had those, amongst whom she was placed, found it? Lord Warwick, though of high religious profession, was a man of bad private character. His second wife, a city lady, was despised in his family on account of her homely origin. And though their country house of Lees was thronged by Puritan divines, whose sermons they not only listened to in public, but repeated in family worship, yet, when they were in town, Warwick House was the resort

of crowds of gay company, and time for serious reflection was not to be thought of there. Dismayed and bewildered by these inconsistencies, Lady Mary openly avowed her resolution of never becoming a Puritan. Some form of godliness she had always retained to please her father ; and in her beloved sister, Lady Ranelagh, whom she acknowledged to be her best and truest friend through life, she saw and confessed the power and the beauty of holiness.

Of Lady Ranelagh we have the following description :—" She employed her whole time, interest, and estate in doing good to others ; and as her great understanding and the vast esteem she was in made all persons, in their several turns of greatness, desire and value her friendship, so she gave herself a clear title to use her interest with them for the service of others, by this, that she never made any advantage of it to any design or end of her own. She was contented with what she had, and, though she was twice stripped of it, she never moved on her own account, but was the general intercessor for all persons of merit, or in want. This had in her the better grace, and was both more Christian and more effectual, because it was not limited within any narrow compass of parties or relations. When any party was depressed she had credit and zeal enough to serve them, and she employed that so effectually, that in the next turn she had a new stock of credit, which she laid out wholly in that labour of love in which she spent her life. She divided her charities

and her friendships, her esteem as well as her bounty, with the truest regard to merit and her own obligations, without any difference made on account of opinion. She had a vast reach both of knowledge and apprehension, an universal affability and easiness of access, a humility that descended to the meanest persons and concerns, and an obliging kindness and readiness to advise those who had no occasion of any further assistance from her; and, with all these and many other excellent qualities, she had the deepest sense of religion, and the most constant turning of her thoughts and discourses that way, that was known perhaps in that age."

It was at Lady Ranelagh's suggestion that Waller wrote his "Divine Poems." Rachel, Lady Russell, speaks of her letters as affording instruction for a whole life, and nourishment for many days. Her name also appears frequently in Evelyn's "Diary and Correspondence;" and between her family and his wife's there was some connection. But she would not have failed, even without this, to be numbered amongst their friends, from the circumstance of her brother, Robert Boyle, residing with her in her house in Pall Mall. Burnet, who speaks of her as the worthy sister of such a brother, relates that his study of chemistry was a charity to others as well as himself, its fruits being distributed by his sister and others, into whose hands he placed it. It would appear also that Lady Ranelagh acted as one of his almoners. Abounding, as she did, in works of mercy, she could not be uncon-

cerned for the spiritual welfare of one so dear to her as her youngest sister; and she was indeed unwearied in her endeavours to win her into those paths of peace, where she herself trod securely. But to the other such a life seemed dim and lonely, when compared with her own gay and glittering existence. She drew back from it reluctantly; "afraid," she says, "of slaying my Isaac, losing all my joy and delight, as if I might never have been merry after my so doing." For a while life yielded her all she asked. She was happy as a wife and mother, and had endeared herself to all her husband's family by the sweetness and amiability of her conduct. And, if the ways at Lees were not quite in accordance with her tastes, when in town she was surrounded by her own friends again, and plunged in her former pleasures:—

" At first Thou gavest me milk and sweetnesses,
I had my wish and way ;
My path was strewed with flowers and happiness,
There was no month but May ! "

Even when trouble came to her, as it did, first, in the loss of her eldest child, a girl, and then in the death of her father, the sky quickly cleared again, the clouds returned not after the rain. " Being young and inconsiderate," she says, " grief did not stick long with me." It came, however; that sure certain event that happens to all, found her out at last. What her trial was she forbears to tell, for it was one which may not seek for itself the relief of sympathy from others. Her domestic life was em-

bittered to her by the increasing violence of her husband's temper. His oaths and profane language terrified her, and so troubled was she by his unkindness, that she was at times even weary of her life. But in this tempestuous clime the peaceable fruits of righteousness were ripening. In one of her "Meditations," written in her more advanced years, she speaks "of the necessity there is that God should sometimes, when He sees the fire of celestial love, in the hearts of His people, in danger of being put out by some other flame, take that away from them. And if He doth it not by death, yet, to prevent our cooling in our affections, He doth, as it were, by some dark providence, draw a curtain between us and what we doat upon." Not that she ever lost her husband's esteem, however his affection towards her may have diminished. His confidence in her truthfulness was implicit. As she used to appeal to others—"You know I dare not, will not lie;" so, though positive enough and impatient of contradiction, "he would never persist, if there happened any contest, against whatever she affirmed peremptorily."

For a while she strove to drown the sense of her trial in amusements, but in vain. All was hollow and unsatisfying. And through all, a voice was resounding in her ears that question, with which Ignatius Loyola won from fame, and gain, and popularity the Apostle of the Indies to his work of love—"What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" She yielded at last,

struck down by sudden fear and anguish. Her child was seized with dangerous illness, and in her agony she vowed herself solemnly to God's service, if He would restore him to her. Her prayer was granted, and it remained for her to fulfil her vow. To begin that new life to which she had devoted herself, she sought for retirement; and, though the country was in an extremely unsettled state, she went down alone to her father-in-law's place in Essex. Her husband, who had been sent there by the Parliament on account of the rising, she met, returning to London, whither he in vain entreated her to accompany him. But, though rather wondering at her own temerity, she proceeded to Lees. She remained there for two months, undisturbed, except by a visit from Lord Goring, who had been such a good friend of hers in her early troubles. He now came, accompanied by Sir Charles Lucas and their troops, to search for arms for the King's service. After having obtained the object of their search, they left the mansion and its young guardian, unmolested.

Other company she had none, except Dr. Walker, the domestic chaplain of the Earl of Warwick, a kind simple-hearted man, to whose instructions she listened with excited and highly-wrought feelings; now trembling with fear, now thrilling with rapture, as he set forth to his hearers the terrors of the law, and the consolation of the Gospel. Out of no disrespect to Dr. Walker we would hint, that it must have been the solemnity of his theme, and the

depth of her own convictions, rather than the eloquence of the preacher, that wrought thus powerfully upon his convert, if we are to judge of the ordinary style of his discourses, from that very dreary composition of his, "The virtuous Woman found." Such was the title of the discourse which he preached, by Lady Ranelagh's request, at the funeral of her, who now tremblingly sought from his lips guidance and direction. To that new way of life into which he guided her, she now steadfastly dedicated herself; and to it from henceforth she unswervingly adhered.

The sincerity of her convictions was speedily tested. The return of Lady Warwick and the rest of the family from London involved her again in society, and in pursuits which rendered it difficult for her to maintain her newly-formed habits of prayer and devotion. The change in her opinion and mode of life was too marked to pass without much painful comment, and provoking ridicule. She, who had been the idlest and gayest of the party, on whose aid they had always relied for the furtherance of any schemes of diversion, now withdrew at set times for the observance of private devotions. Her costly dresses were discarded that she might have more to bestow upon the poor. Romances were laid aside for the Bible. The society of the gay and thoughtless was shunned by her, whilst she became acquainted with holy and strict divines, who much frequented the house, but whose conversation she had not hitherto much affected. Re-

solution to continue as she had begun, and strength to vanquish the temptations by which she was assailed, were not to be derived from any resources of her own. Counsel and encouragement she had from the care and kindness of Dr. Walker, and her constant, truest friend, Lady Ranelagh. But the might to carry on the warfare on which she had entered was to be obtained only from on high; and in constant fervent prayer she alone found her necessities supplied.

To gain uninterrupted leisure for this purpose was not easy. To obtain it she made for herself a solitude and a sanctuary amidst the grounds that surrounded her home, the old Priory of Lees. These were famed for their beauty. The park had been enclosed as early as the reign of King John. And in 1342 the Prior of Lees brought himself into trouble by a farther enclosure, as well as by hunting in the forest without warrant. From the hands of the churchmen it passed into those of Sir Richard Rich, the ancestor of the Earls of Warwick, to whom it was presented by Henry the Eighth. He built there a noble brick mansion. It consisted, we are told, "of two courts, an outer, and an inner one, the latter of which towards the garden was faced with freestone." "That delicious Lees" was the title bestowed by Robert Boyle on his sister's home. And a friend of the Earl of Warwick told him, that "he had good reason to make sure of heaven; as he would be a great loser in changing so charming a place for hell."

“ There is no garden well-contrived that has not Enoch’s walk in it,” observes Charles Howe, in one of his quaint meditations. Such to Lady Mary was the Wilderness, a long grove with an arbour in it. Here she was accustomed to spend the fresh hours of the early morning ; and in this beloved resort “ heartsease,” as she was wont to designate prayer, abounded for her at all times. In addition to these private exercises she “ regularly and devoutly observed all the orders of the Church of England in its liturgy and public service, which she failed not to attend twice a day with exemplary reverence.” In her diary she speaks of having attended family prayer in the chapel, “ namely, the Common Prayer.” This was generally used in family worship, in preference to other forms. Thus, when its use was prohibited, Owen Feltham drew up a form of prayer for morning and evening to be substituted for it in the Countess of Thomond’s family.

From what is further said of Lady Mary “ warming her heart (though never with strange fires) at private altars in her own chamber or closet,” it may be inferred, that she occasionally availed herself of the ministrations of others besides the regularly ordained clergy. And, later, we find nonconformist ministers amongst the objects of her bounty ; as they were also of Anne, Countess of Pembroke’s, though she had before been a liberal benefactor to the deprived clergy. But it is remarkable, when we consider what vital points were contended for on each

side, how little party feeling seems to have influenced the conduct of women of that period.

The ten succeeding years were unmarked to Lady Mary, except by severe attacks of illness, through which she was tenderly watched by Lady Ranelagh. On one occasion her recovery was retarded by the shock she received in hearing of the execution of the King. The horror of these tidings brought on a relapse that had nearly proved fatal. In one mysterious attack her mind appeared to have been seriously affected; and her physician, Dr. Wright, (a name commonly assumed by Jesuits practising medicine at that time,) assured her that in all his experience he had never met but with one similar case. During this illness she gratefully notes "the great, tender and obliging care" shown her by her husband and father-in-law. Of Lord Warwick she always speaks with filial affection; and his death, which occurred in 1658, was one of the keenest sorrows of her life. "In the almost seventeen years I lived with him," she wrote, "from the time I came into his family until his death, he was to me the most civil, kind and obliging father that ever any person had, and I never had from him anything but constant kindness. He was one of the most best-natured and cheerfullest persons I have in my time met with, and it was some time before I could forbear exceeding much to mourn for him."

His death was hastened by grief for the loss of his grandson, Robert Rich, who died at the early age of three-and-twenty. He had been married

only a few months before to Frances Cromwell, youngest daughter of the Protector. His father, soon after succeeding to the title of Earl of Warwick, followed him to the grave, and, as he left only three daughters, his brother Charles inherited both his titles and estates.





II.

Lady Warwick's care of her nieces—Division of her time—Management of her family—Her great charity—Similar instances in Lady Alice Lucy and others—Lady Warwick's character as a neighbour—Her domestic trials—Death of Lord Warwick—Her own illness and death.

THE loss of her relatives, whilst it occasioned Lady Warwick sincere sorrow, produced also an alteration in her outward circumstances, that aroused her to increased jealousy and watchfulness over her own heart. It gave her besides the care of three orphan daughters of the late Earl, for whom she felt a mother's affection, and on whom she bestowed a mother's care. How she catechized, advised, and instructed them, is constantly noted in her "Diary." One of these entries may serve as a sample of the rest:—

"After dinner," she wrote, "I heard my Lady Essex repeat the sermon; and did with all the awakening considerations I could, endeavour to persuade her to be strictly religious. Whilst I was endeavouring to move her heart, God was pleased to move mine, and to enable me to speak to

her with many tears ; and when she was gone from me to make me pour out my heart in prayer to God for mercy for her, and her two sisters." And on no occasion do we find Lady Warwick condemning herself more severely, than when betrayed into impatience, or into any expression of anger, towards her nieces.

From Lincoln's Inn Fields, where she had remained in the short interval that elapsed between the death of her father-in-law and his eldest son, she removed with the rest of her family to Lees. Here for the remainder of her life she principally resided. The manner in which her time was spent there is described by Dr. Walker :—" She usually walked two hours daily in the morning to meditate alone ; in which Divine art she was an accomplished mistress. After this consecrating of the day, with reading the Scriptures, prayer, and meditations, a short dressing time, and ordering her domestic affairs, or reading some good book she spent the remainder of her morning till chapel prayers, from which she was never absent, and at which she was ever reverent, and a devout example to her whole family." In the evening she was accustomed to retire, in order to recall, and note in her " Diary," her course of life during the past day. But when her husband's failing health deprived her of this season of leisure, she contrived by early rising to gain some hours of the quiet silent morning for the fulfilment of this work. The portion of her " Diary" which has been published, is mainly a record of her

spiritual emotions, and mental conflicts ; and is an abridgment made from the original by the Rev. Thomas Woodrooffe, who succeeded Dr. Walker as domestic chaplain at Lees. In addition, she left a MS. entitled, " Some specialities in the life of M. Warwick," which she wrote a few years before her death ; and in which she gives a very full account of her early days. Many devout reflections and meditations which she left in writing were also the employment of her hours of retirement. But her religion was not restrained to the care for her own soul, but was extended to all who came within her influence. As it was her sole ambition to be the mistress of a religious family, she exacted the constant attendance of her servants at chapel, and their reverent behaviour when there, whilst none could absent themselves without her remarking it.

Not content with compelling their attendance on the more formal observances of religion, she gave them also private instruction. She catechized her maids on Sunday evening, and took especial pains in assisting them in preparation for the Holy Communion, to which she urgently entreated them to approach. Nor were her cares confined to her domestic servants only. The poor weeding women, employed in the grounds, were also the objects of her solicitude. Her mornings were sometimes spent in reading to them, her afternoons in catechizing and exhorting them. To guard her attendants against waste of time, she laid in their way books that might engage their attention in any idle mo-

ment ; and by making their service to herself easy, she gave them the better opportunity of waiting upon the Lord without distraction. She treated all her servants as friends, and “ cared as much to please them as other persons’ servants can do to please their masters.”

One rule observed by her in the government of her household is not, perhaps, to be imitated. She made religion in her servants “ the footstep to preferment,” and in this must have put a stumbling-block in the way of many. But she was of too truthful a nature herself to suspect others of less candid dealing. A falsehood was in her eyes the most unpardonable fault in a servant ; and she used often to say, “ Tell me the truth, and I can forgive you anything.”

But her charity, if it began at home, did not end there. “ If any were sick, or tempted, or in any distress of body or mind, whither should they go but to the good Countess, whose closet or still-house was their shop for chirurgery and physic, and herself (for she would visit the meanest of them personally) and ministers, whom she would send to them, their spiritual physicians ? The poor she fed in great numbers, not only with fragments and broken meat, but with liberal provision, purposely made for them. She was a great pitier, yea, a great lover of the poor, and she built a convenient house on purpose for them, at her London seat (as they had one at Lees), to shelter them from rain and heat whilst they received their dole. And during her absence in Lon-

don with her family, twice a week, good beef and bread were provided for the poor of four adjacent parishes." Of the allowance made to her by her husband in his lifetime she devoted a third to charitable uses; and though she sometimes exceeded, she never fell short of this proportion in her alms; indeed, she was designated as "the lady that would borrow money to give away." She considered all in distress and need as having a claim on her bounty. To many scholars at the University she made allowances, varying from five to thirty pounds a-year. Foreigners, who forsook their own country on account of their religion, found her hand stretched out for their assistance. Poor children were clothed and kept at school by her, even in Wales, which she aided "to rescue from its remaining ignorance and semi-barbarism." Besides these, "many ministers of both denominations, as well as conformists, whose livings were so small as not to yield them a subsistence, and those who had none at all, were recipients of her bounty." Animated by the same spirit that prompted that beautiful utterance to "the dear saint" of Wartburg,—“I tell you it is our duty to make all men as happy as possible,”—her charity even overflowed all ordinary bounds. For it was extended to those, who, if not in actual want, were yet burdened by heavy cares, and involved in harassing difficulties, from which a soft unseen hand quietly released them.

In the altered state of modern society it is of ne-

cessity, perhaps, that our almsdeeds should be wrought in a somewhat different fashion to those of an earlier period. Our charitable institutions and religious societies, doubtless, work no less effectually for the accomplishment of their purpose than a simpler system. Yet it may be questioned, whether the heart of the benefactor reaps as happy effects as when those deeds of mercy were the direct acts of one individual, moved by love and pity to supply the wants, and relieve the sufferings, of another.

Many were the women of this century, who, in a quiet course of almsgiving that sought no praise and shunned observation, have

“ Filled their odorous lamps with deeds of light.”

Thus Lady Alice Lucy has been commemorated for her bounty, notwithstanding her modest reserve, which made her forbid that any memorial of herself should be inscribed on the magnificent tomb that she erected to her husband. None who sought alms at her gate were sent empty away, whilst the aged, or such as had suffered in the wars, received an additional dole. Every week bread was given away in the neighbouring towns; and corn was sold by her “ in the markets as it were by retail, in such small quantities as might not exceed the poor’s abilities to purchase.” Every day a certain number of poor guests sat down to her table. Besides which she continually employed many poor old men and women in such works as were fit and suitable to their skill and strength. When the physician came at any time to her house, she used to make inquiry

whether any were sick in the town, that if any were, they might partake of the same benefit with herself. "But at all times when any wanted health she presently had intelligence of it, and most cheerfully communicated whatsoever she conceived conducive to their recovery, having not only great store of cordials and restoratives always by her, but great skill and judgment in the application of them."

Medical skill, as it is well known, was then a necessary accomplishment amongst country ladies. Marvellous were the cures wrought by the Countess of Arundel; she even turned her house into an hospital, receiving many invalids there, who came to consult her from a distance. And some remained as long as three months under her roof. Rather a frightful idea of the Lazaruses, by whom her gate was besieged, is suggested by the fact, that in some years as many as "three-score dozen of sheepskins were spent merely in making the plaisters she gave."

Her good works were not limited to the sick. Daily alms were given at her gate; and besides feeding twenty persons every day with what remained from the table of her household, three times a week food was prepared for upwards of a hundred poor people in the parish. On the aged and sick a monthly allowance of money was bestowed. Widows were pensioned, prisoners released, poor maidens portioned, and schools supported by her. Liberal towards others, in her own expenses she exercised a rigid economy. She never wore any but a dress

of cheap black stuff; and a gold cross containing a relic was the only ornament she ever permitted herself, and this only on some holyday. For forty years she never used a looking-glass, and for about as long a period never changed the fashion of her attire. The Countess, however, belonged to the earlier half of the century; but Lady Frances Hobart, daughter of the Earl of Bridgenorth, who survived the Restoration, never wore a silk dress after the death of her husband, Sir Robert Hobart, who was accustomed to call her "my dear saint!" A fourth of her income she spent in charity. Her house was open for the reception of strangers. Her time was devoted to visiting the poor and the afflicted; and she dressed the wounds of the sick with her own hands.

Lady Langham, always before she went out, took care to furnish her "poor man's purse" with money to be distributed amongst such necessitous objects as Providence, before her return, might cast in her way. But so secretly were her good deeds accomplished, that the most open testimony accorded them were the crowds of sorrowing poor that followed her to her grave. Such also was the generous impulse of Lady Elizabeth Brooke, of whom "when charity was asked it was never a question whether she should give or no; but only how much it was fit she should give." She must, indeed, have possessed some marvellous art of managing her resources, as it is said that "her generosity was such that one would have imagined there was no room

for her alms ; and her charity was such that it was matter of wonder that she could so nobly entertain her friends. But her provident frugality and good management, with the Divine blessing, enabled her to perform both to admiration."

Lady Warwick, too, whilst compassionate to her inferiors, was no less friendly to her equals. "As a neighbour," we are told, "she was so kind and courteous, it advanced the rent of adjacent houses to be situated near her. Not only her house and table, but her countenance and very heart, were open to all persons of quality in a considerable circuit."

"Such," says Dr. Walker, "was the affectionate esteem in which she was held by her neighbours, that she was, like Titus, the delight and darling of her country ; and with so loving a willingness did they delight to serve her, that you might see fifty fresh, brave, and gallant teams, day after day, bringing in her provisions, without other invitations than the bare knowledge of the time, which themselves would inquire out ; and nothing would grieve them more than to be prevented in paying this honour and respect." So highly were her truth and integrity esteemed by those amongst whom she dwelt, that disputes and differences were frequently referred to her for adjustment ; and her settlement of the question was always readily acquiesced in by the contending parties.

It is to himself, evidently, that Dr. Walker alludes, when, in speaking of "the many endeared cordial friends" by whom Lady Warwick was es-

teemed, he observes, that “concerning one of them she used often, with much thankfulness, to say he was a friend of God Almighty’s giving, even beyond her own expectation.” He had for some time ceased to occupy the post of chaplain in her family, which, when Lees came into her husband’s possession, was held by Mr. Woodrooffe. But though he had been presented to the living of Fyfield, where he resided, they still continued in habits of constant intercourse. His daughter was the favourite companion of her nieces, with whom she spent much of her time. And when Dr. Walker and his wife kept the anniversary of their wedding-day, the Earl and Countess not only supplied them with venison for the feast, but themselves sat down with them to partake of it.

Of her life at Lees, after it came into her husband’s possession, we find ample details given in her “Diary.” Of this, however, only a portion has been made public, extending from July, 1666, to April 12th, 1672; just six years before the date of her death. Her lot was darkened with many trials, and her prayer against prosperity, which we find in one of her Scriptural reflections, was strictly fulfilled:—“O Lord, I beseech Thee, give me not my portion in this life, nor let me have a short heaven here upon earth, and an eternal hell hereafter.” Her only son died of small-pox, shortly after his marriage with Lady Ann Cavendish. His mother alone attended upon him in his illness, even his young wife removing to her father’s house for fear

of infection. Lord Warwick, on receiving tidings of his loss, exclaimed with a cry so bitter that it was even heard at a great distance, that this would kill his wife, who was better to him than ten sons. Yet his appreciation of Lady Warwick's worth by no means induced him to seek her happiness. That he was a martyr to gout, which rendered him a helpless cripple for many years before his death, may be a sufficient apology for the irritability of his temper, and the violence with which he gave expression to it. But this cannot, surely, be pleaded in excuse for the profanity of his language, and the irreligion of his conduct. This was all the more to be remarked in one, brought up in a family of such high religious profession as the Riches. With vehement protestations he used to declare to Dr. Walker, "that he would rather have his wife with five thousand pounds, than any woman living with twenty." And, with a sort of coarse pride in her piety, he once conveyed a minister of religion to a hiding-place, adjoining her private oratory, that he might hear and admire the fervency of her supplications. Yet the "Diary" abounds with proofs of his harsh and ungodly behaviour. The sinfulness of this towards God, yet more than its unkindness to herself, deeply afflicted her tender conscience.

But if trouble was hard at hand, consolation was not far to seek. The following extracts from her "Diary" are but examples of many similar passages:—

"JULY 30, 1666. In the morning as soon as I awoke, I

blessed God, then went out alone into the Wilderness to meditate ; and there God was pleased to give me sweet communion with Him, and to fix my thoughts much upon my death, and to make me pray with strong cries and abundance of tears that I might be prepared for that great change. And then God was pleased to make me meditate upon the joys of heaven, and to consider that heaven would make me eternally happy in the fruition of God in love, which did mightily ravish my heart with desires to enter into those joys. My soul was exceedingly carried out with desires to be with Christ, and I came away much refreshed, and with my heart exceedingly cheered. After I was dressed, I went into my closet, read and prayed ; and there, too, the desires of my heart went out exceedingly after God ; I blessed God heartily for His mercies, then went to family prayers. My heart breathed after God." The day, however, did not close in peace. "After dinner, without any occasion given, my lord fell into a great passion with me ; I bore it patiently, without saying anything to provoke it farther, though I was inwardly troubled a while for it."

She was not always so successful in subduing her emotions :—

"My lord without any occasion falling into a great passion with me, troubled me so much, that I fell into a dispute with him, wherein I was very passionately affected, and wept much, and spake unadvisedly with my lips, telling him that I was so much troubled with his unkindness to me, that I was weary of my life. After I came from him, too, I wept much ; but afterwards I went to prayer, and therein did beg God's pardon for my shedding so many tears for anything but my sins, and for not being content with what His providence was pleased to order me."

That, which in the Middle Ages was esteemed a special mark of Divine favour—the gift of tears

—seems to have been bestowed in no small degree on Lady Warwick. Thus we find her writing, August 28th, 1666 :—

“ As soon as I was up, I went into the Wilderness, having some trouble upon me, to meditate; when I had showed before God all my trouble, I was enabled, as Hannah did, to come away—and my countenance was no more sad, but refreshed. When I had with many tears, groans, and sighs, begged God to be ‘All in all’ to me in Himself, then I prayed privately in my closet, where the desires of my heart went out after God.”

And, again, May 25th, 1667 :—

“ I DID with many sighs and groans, confess my sins; whilst I was thinking of their heinousness, and was ready to be frightened to go to God for pardon of them, they were so many, God was pleased to put this thought into my mind, that when my son had once offended me exceedingly, and I thought I could not in a great while be able to forgive him, yet upon seeing him of a sudden fall down upon his knees, and with earnestness and tears beg my pardon, I could not longer retain my anger, but instantly pardoned him: God was pleased by this thought to encourage me, by considering He was much more merciful than I could be; I did then with tears of contrition confess my sins, and plead the promises for mercy.”

But that her life had taken a tinge of sadness from the uncongenial nature with which it was shared is apparent from such passages as the following :—

“ I WENT to London to dine at Newport House, and from thence to see Warwick House, which I had not seen before, since my lord began to build; whilst I was there the workmen, not having done what they should,

put my lord into a passion, and made him swear very much, which was so great a trouble to me that I took no joy in seeing the house, though it was very fine, but I got into a private room, and begged God to forgive my poor husband his swearing, and to give him patience that the house might be perfumed with prayers, and not profaned by oaths, and that God might delight to dwell amongst us there."

Elsewhere, in bewailing her husband's sins, she says:—

"I did exceedingly adore and admire God's mercy, that did yet keep the plague out of my house, when that curse was so usually in my husband's mouth."

The horror, with which that expression must have been regarded in the days when it was first employed as an imprecation, is vividly suggested to us by those last words.

Another of her trials arose from the godless character of her brother-in-law, Hatton Rich, become, since the death of her son, Lord Warwick's heir. With an utter absence of delicacy or good feeling, he used to grieve her spirit by announcing the transformations he intended effecting in the household at Lees, as soon as his brother's death, which he made sure was to precede his own, should leave him master there. To such an occasion there seems to be some allusion in the "Diary" of March 15th, 1667:—

"In the morning, as soon as up, I retired and read in the Word; then meditated, but with much distraction; yet I continued to do it, but I could not bring my mind

into the frame that I desired ; then I went to prayers ; my heart at first was dull then also, but at last it did breathe after God. Afterwards, my lord being exceedingly passionate with D., I strove to take him off from it, but he fell violently passionate against me, which made me, wicked wretch that I was, speak passionate words softly to myself, unadvisedly with my lips : and, O Lord, though no man heard me, yet Thou didst. Therefore, O Lord, pardon Thy unworthy servant. My brother Hatton dined with us that day, and swore dreadfully, and talked so very ill, that I thought nothing out of hell could have done : I was troubled to hear it, and did all I could to keep him from it ; but not being able to do it, I did shew my dislike at it, and was, by God's mercy, enabled to own religion, and to speak good of it before him.

“ After dinner I got away from that wicked company ; my soul being much grieved to hear my poor husband swear so much. I went to visit my Lady Roberts” (Lord Warwick's sister) “ where I stayed till evening. After supper, I retired, and with much sadness, thought upon what I had done, in speaking unadvisedly with my lips ; I did confess my sins to God, and, with many tears, begged pardon, and did also beg that God would give my husband repentance for that ill-spent day, and did, with many tears, beg of God to give him a new heart, and to sanctify to him that counsel which before supper I had given him : for when he was alone, I did, with great affection, and with much respect, but with great plainness, tell him of his wicked swearing, and begged him to strive against it, and told him what a grief it was to me to see him grow worse and worse.”

It was certainly not for want of good counsel from his wife that Lord Warwick did not improve. But from the specimens transmitted by Dr. Walker of her exhortations we are free to confess, that,

however incontrovertible the substance of her arguments may have been, they were not presented in a form the most likely to conciliate opponents, or to silence gainsayers. A better art of conversion she did possess; and that was "an extensive charity, that would make people good by believing them to be so."

One trial was spared her, proving the truth of the axiom, that "our worst troubles are those that never happen." She had not the affliction of seeing all the good she had striven to effect in her family frustrated at her husband's death. Hatton Rich died three years before Lord Warwick, who survived him. On his death, in 1673, he left his wife his sole executrix, and bequeathed his whole estate to her for her life and a year after, "as a testimony of his grateful esteem of her merits." Thus, as it was observed, giving all his estate to pious uses. To those ends Lady Warwick wholly devoted it during the few years in which she survived the Earl. After this the estate devolved to his nieces, who were all married during her lifetime.

In the spring of 1678 she was seized with what, though it appeared but a slight indisposition, proved to be her last illness. Nearly ten years before, when contemplating this solemn period, she had thus expressed herself:—

"It pleased God to give me large thoughts of death, and of a future state of blessedness; and whilst I was considering how glorious and happy I should be in the eternal enjoyment of God, I found myself exceedingly

self-condemned, that I should ever be either afraid, or loth, to die, and was able with great detestation to judge myself to be a most irrational creature to desire to live in this Bochim, this place of weeping, rather than to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I did, with plenty of tears, bemoan my not enough desiring to be with Christ, which I was at this time enabled to judge was far better for me ; and I did most passionately and earnestly desire, that for the rest of my life I might have only life in patience, and death in desire. God was pleased to give me a prospect of all the conditions of life through which His providence had led me, and to make me call to remembrance the unsatisfactoriness I had found in all things wherein I had too much placed my happiness, and I found in all sublunary things a great emptiness. And by this consideration, that nothing in the world had ever answered, but still deceived my raised expectations by sensible defects and almost heart-breaking disappointments, it pleased God to raise my thoughts to a state of blessedness that would be much above my raised expectations, and this made me rejoice in God as my everlasting portion."

He, Whom she had thus chosen in the days of health, forsook her not, when her strength failed her. On Friday, the 12th of April, she said, in taking leave of some friends with whom she had been conversing:—" Well, ladies, if I were one hour in heaven, I would not be again with you, as well as I love you."

Later in the day, whilst engaged in prayer with Dr. Walker and other friends, a lady who knelt near the chair where the Countess sat, holding an orange in her hand to revive herself with its scent, heard her sigh deeply. Looking up, she saw that

she had passed from prayer to praise, from suffering to rest. That sigh had wafted her to her bliss in "the land that is very far off."

The Wilderness echoed no longer with her prayers; and the poor, who gathered round her gate, received no more their alms from the good Countess. Of the fair mansion, that was her earthly home, scarce a vestige remains. For Lees, as it was quaintly remarked, "though a Paradise, had not the Tree of Life in it." The "Tower Gateway," finely embattled, and with richly ornamented doors and windows, is the only relic that now attests its former greatness.

The Priory, and a portion of the park adjacent to it, descended to Robert Montague, Earl of Manchester, nephew to the Earl of Warwick. It subsequently passed from his family into other hands; and at last became the property of Guy's Hospital, when the Governors caused the house to be demolished, and the parks to be divided into farms.





III.

Society in the neighbourhood of Lees—Lady Maynard of Easton Lodge—Bishop Ken's account of her—Lady Vere—Eulogised by Gurnall—Her great piety and charity.

THE widely-spread family connections, both of Lord Warwick's family and her own, brought Lady Warwick, during her visits to London, into contact with society, in the interests and pleasures of which she had very little sympathy. Often, at dinner and till evening, she describes herself as entertaining "a great deal of vain company." Her husband's relationship with the Lord Chamberlain, and the marriage of her own niece, Lady Henrietta Boyle, to Laurence Hyde, gave her an access to the Court circle, which many would have highly prized. The Duchess of York appears to have sincerely valued her. But she speaks of herself, after having been "civilly received by the King, and Queen, and Duchess," as returning home without having her heart at all affected with the Court, and being much more inclined to pity than to envy them. Amidst the splendours of the feast, held on St. George's

Day, at Whitehall, she recalled a far different scene. She beheld a scaffold rising beneath a wintry sky, and a king coming forth to meet his doom there. From a grand reception at Court, "where the Queen and all her ladies were arrayed with great gallantry of jewels," she retired gladly to commune with her own heart, and in her chamber. And there in her deliberate thoughts she preferred retirement and the worship of God before all the glories of all the Courts in the world. She had gazed undazzled upon the glittering pageant, for she remembered how the children of God shall hereafter shine as the sun itself in the firmament. A visit to Lord Clarendon, after his fall, preached "a loud sermon" to her on the instability of earthly greatness, and on the insecurity of princely favour. And when present at the gaities of a wedding-feast, or a christening party, her heart was lifted up in silent, fervent prayer.

At Lees Lady Warwick could better choose her associates, and direct their conversation. Her eldest niece, Lady Ann Rich, married, during her uncle's lifetime, a son of Sir John Barrington, with whom she resided at Hatfield, ten miles distant from her former home. With her and her children Lady Warwick had constant intercourse. Lady Everard, who gratefully acknowledged the benefit she derived from her society, was often her guest. In Lady Dawes, whose son was afterwards Bishop of Chester, she appears to have greatly interested herself. On the death of her husband, Sir John

Dawes, she brought her to her own home, and was unwearied in her endeavours to soothe and comfort her. Of these, and many others of whom she speaks as friends and neighbours, we know only the names. But of Lady Maynard, with whom she appears to have been very intimate, and who is constantly named amongst the visitors at Lees, we have from another source more ample information.

In the "Specialities" in her life, Lady Warwick relates, as one of its marked mercies, her escape from a dangerous accident once when her coach was upset, as she and one of her nieces were on their way to Easton Lodge where Lady Maynard resided. William, Lord Maynard, whose fidelity to the royal cause having exposed him to an impeachment for high treason by the Parliament, in 1647, gained for him the office of comptroller of the household at the Restoration, married, for his second wife, Lady Margaret Murray, daughter of the Earl of Dysart. She was scarcely twenty at this time. Soon afterwards Bishop Ken appears to have formed her acquaintance, and from that period down to her death, which took place in 1684, when she was little more than forty, he acted as her spiritual adviser. In her funeral sermon he speaks of having known her more than twenty years, and of having been admitted into her most intimate thoughts. It is from this sermon that all we know of her life and character is derived; and what we are about to relate of it shall be given for the most part in the Bishop's words.

She was early deprived by death of her mother, to whom she was in all respects so dutiful a child, that she protested her daughter had never in any one instance offended her. For nine years of her life she was surrounded by the temptations and trials of the Court. But, whilst there, she lived with all the abstraction of a recluse; for she not only conquered the world, but triumphed over it. For secular greatness she had a noble contempt, and was superior also to all those vanities and diversions which to her age might have offered temptations. No frivolous amusements could allure, no vain pomps dazzle that serene soul, whose satisfaction was found in the service of God, and whose sole recreation it was to do good and to seek the happiness of others. Her own words are:—"We are to seek for comfort and joy from God's ordinances, and not to take the usual course of the world, to drive away melancholy by exposing ourselves to temptations."

At peace with herself, at peace with God, and at peace with all the world, she was so little given to talk, and was so careful to conceal her goodness, that it did not appear at first sight. Yet after a time her virtue would break out, whether she would or no. Like Moses, her face shone and she did not know it.

She looked always pleased rather than cheerful. Her conversation was even and serious, yet easy and affable. Her interpretations of what others did were always candid and charitable. Never was she

seen indecently angry, or out of humour. Never was she heard to give an ill character, or pass a hard censure, or speak an idle word. But "she opened her mouth in wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness." Mildness softened her reproofs. To the afflicted she administered consolation from her own manifold experience of the Divine goodness. For she behaved with so condoling a tenderness, that she seemed to translate their anguish on herself.

Her sympathy was ready for all in misery. Besides her private alms, which she carefully concealed from observation, she was a common patroness to the poor and needy, and a common physician to her sick neighbours. Often would she with her own hands dress their most loathsome sores, and sometimes keep them in her family, where she gave them both diet and lodging till they were cured. She would then clothe them, and send them home, to give God thanks for their recovery. If they died, her charity accompanied them sometimes to the very grave, and she took care even of their burial.

In her family she always united Martha and Mary together. For she took a due care of all her domestic affairs; and managed them with a wise frugality, with a constant deference to God's merciful providence, and without either covetous fears or restless anxiety. But withal, "she sat at the feet of Jesus, and heard His Word," and of the two was still most intent on "the better part." She studiously endeavoured to make all that attended her more

God's servants than her own, and treated them with meekness, indulgence, and condescension, like one who was always mindful that she herself also had a Master in heaven. But her oratory was the place where she principally resided, and where she was most at home ; and her chief employment was prayer and praise. She had devotions suited to all the primitive hours of prayer ; for which she had out of several authors transcribed many excellent forms. With David she praised God seven times a day, or supplied the want of these solemn hours by a kind of perpetuity of ejaculations, which she had ready to answer all occasions, and to fill up all vacant intervals. And, if she happened to wake in the night, even for midnight she was never unprovided with proper prayers. Thus did this gracious soul, having been enkindled by fire from heaven in her baptism, live a continual sacrifice, and kept the fire always burning, always in ascension, always aspiring towards heaven, from whence it fell.

To prayer she added meditation, and study of the holy Scriptures, and of other serious and devout books, in which she spent most of her time. Her religion was not grounded on the indifference of an unreasoning faith, or imbibed from education only, but proceeded from a well-studied choice, directed by God's Holy Spirit, Whose guidance she daily invoked. But, her choice once made, she was immoveable as a rock, and so well satisfied in the Catholic Faith, professed in the Church of England, that to the strictness of a primitive saint she joined,

we may believe, the resolution of a martyr. For in an age when the generality of the nation were like children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, she still continued steadfast in the Communion of the Church of England. When the priests and service of God were driven into corners she daily resorted, though with great difficulty, to the public prayers. She was also remarkably charitable to all the suffering royalists, whom she visited and relieved, fed, clothed, and comforted. The silenced, plundered, and persecuted clergy she thought worthy of double honour. To their use she dedicated a certain sum yearly out of her income. Nor did her zeal, stimulated by opposition into energy, grow faint and languid in the hour of prosperity. Morning and evening she offered up to God the public offices, and when she was not able to go to the House of Prayer, she had them read to her in her chamber. Her devotions were enlarged on the Fasts and Festivals of the Church, but especially on the Lord's Day, the hours of which she divided between the church and her closet. She never failed, on all opportunities, to approach the holy altar.

When she came home she recollected, and wrote down from memory, abstracts of the sermons which she heard in church, that she might be "not only a hearer of the Word, but a doer also." To these devout exercises she added fasting. On those days, appointed by the Church for that purpose, she used a particular office of prayer and humiliation for

the sins of the nation, and was importunate at the throne of grace to avert God's judgments, and to implore His blessing on the land. And, when enfeebled health forbade the continuance of these austerities, she was accustomed on days of abstinence to employ other modes of mortification.

Amongst many blessings bestowed upon her, health was one that was withheld; her pains and sicknesses were sharp and many. But she marvelled not at this, as though some strange thing had happened unto her:—"Where," she asked, "is our conformity to the Captain of our salvation, if we have no sufferings? God, by permitting our conditions to be uneasy, by that gentle way invites us to higher satisfactions than are to be met with here." And, whilst thus glorifying God in the fires, with a prostrate spirit she confessed, that "He was most righteous in all that had befallen her, and that there had been so much mercy mixed with His chastising that she had been but too happy." Humble, contented, and thankful amidst her afflictions, her soul always rested on God's paternal mercy, on all His exceeding great and precious promises, as on a sure and steadfast anchor, which she knew would secure her in the most tempestuous calamities. To His blessed will she hourly offered up her own, for she knew it was as much her duty to suffer His fatherly inflictions as to obey His commands.

From other trials she was spared, except what were imposed on her by her sympathy for others.

For she made not only the concerns of all who were blessed with her friendship, but all their afflictions, also, her own; loving them with a charity like that which the blessed show to one another in heaven.

To her husband she was "the immediate gift of God, sent by propitious heaven, for a good angel, as well as for a wife." In her letters she thanks him repeatedly, in the most affectionate terms, for "his invaluable and unparalleled kindness towards her;" most fervently praying that the Lord Jesus Christ would be his exceeding great reward, and his portion for ever.

As a mother she was unspeakably tender and careful of the two children with which God had blessed her. But she would by no means suffer that, in order that they should be amply provided for, the wants and necessities of poor Christians should be overlooked. She held that alms and the prayers of the poor would bring a greater blessing to them than thousands a year. Her zeal for the eternal welfare of her children was predominant over all concern for their temporal interests. She made it her dying request, that in their education their piety should be principally regarded. "To make them pious Christians would," she said, "be the best provision that could be made for them." In reference to her son, it was her express desire that he should be good, rather than either rich or great; "that he should be bred in the strictest principles of sobriety, piety, and charity, of temperance and in-

nocency of life, that could be ; that he should never be that which those corrupt days called a wit, or a fine gentleman ; but an honest and sincere Christian she desired he might be."

All her life she had been, to use her own expression, " making it her business to fit herself for her change, knowing the moment of it to be uncertain, and having no assurance that her warning would be great." And so, though she received all the temporal blessings, which the Divine goodness was pleased to vouchsafe her, with an overflowing thankfulness, yet her affections were so disengaged from them, and her temperance and moderation were so habitual, that she rather used than enjoyed them, and was always ready to restore them to the same gracious Hand that gave them. " All blessings," she was wont to say, " are given us on this condition, that either they must be taken from us, or we from them ; if, then, we love anything which we esteem a blessing, we are to give God the glory and to resign it freely."

In anticipation of her own removal she wrote many letters to her dearest friends, which were found in her cabinet, not to be delivered until after her death. In some of these she gave the directions for her children's education, which have been before referred to. In some, the hope of reunion to her beloved ones dispelled the gloom of the anticipated separation :—" Oh ! how joyful shall we be," she wrote, " to meet at Christ's right hand ; if we may be admitted into that elect number." The time

drew near for which she had made such earnest and diligent preparation. Her failing state was apparent to all. On Whit Sunday, 1682, she received her *viaticum*, the most Holy Body and Blood of her Saviour; and towards the close of the week was removed from Whitehall to Easton Lodge. Not that any hopes of her recovery were entertained; but it was thought that she might have some little present relief from the country air. Besides this, it was her own wish that she might die in a place which she loved, and in which God had made her an instrument of so great good to the country, and which was near her grave. Formerly, in contemplating this hour, she had exclaimed:—"Since God gives us all, let us not be sorrowful though we are to part with all. The Kingdom of Heaven is a prize that is worth striving for, though it cost us dear. Alas! what is there in this world that links our hearts so close to it!" So now she professed that there was nothing hard to be parted with but her lord and her dear children; yet even this passion, intense as it was, she now overcame for the sake of her God, Whom she loved infinitely better. Having committed into His fatherly protection those to whom her heart so closely clung, she resigned herself in cheerful acquiescence to His good pleasure, cheered by the hope of praying for those in heaven whom she hoped ere long to meet there. And now all the bands of union being untied, her soul was set at liberty; and, on the wings of angels, took a direct and vigorous flight to its native country, heaven, from whence it first flew down.

Such is a brief abstract of the life of this saintly woman, with whom it was Lady Warwick's privilege to be on terms of intimacy; and from whose conversation she received edification and comfort. "For there was," we are told, "no entertainment in the whole world so pleasing to her as the discourse of heavenly things, and those she spoke of with such a spiritual relish, that at first hearing you might perceive she was in earnest, that she really 'tasted the Lord was good,' and felt all she spake."

Another of her friends, to whom reference has been made, was in some respects a contrast to Lady Maynard. Whilst the latter, after a calm life of which little is to be recorded, except the piety by which it was marked, was in a short time made perfect, Lady Vere closed a greatly chequered and sorely tried existence at the advanced age of ninety. Lady Maynard was the pupil of Duppa, and the friend of Ken—Lady Vere the correspondent of Archbishop Ussher, and the patron and benefactor of Puritan divines, who dedicated their works to her in return for her bounty. Lady Maynard shared in the persecutions, and ministered to the necessities of the deprived clergy, during the Commonwealth. Lady Vere was in great favour with the Parliament, who committed to her for a while the care of the royal children. The eulogy of the one was pronounced by Ken; Gurnall proclaimed the praises of the other. In one point they were alike—in the abundance of their good deeds and in their unconsciousness of their own excellence. Lady Vere

never thought that she had done anything that deserved commending. "She did not," says her quaint panegyrist, "give her charity, as some throw their money into a basin at a collection, so as that it might ring again; but it fell like oil into a vessel, without any noise."

Her firm trust in God was expressed by the motto, which in her youth she adopted, and inscribed in all her books:—"The Lord will provide." It was severely tested, but never failed. She was an orphan early, and a young widow. Her two sons were removed from her by death, the one at fourteen years of age, the other at three-and-twenty. After the death of her first husband, Mr. William Hobby, she was married to Sir Horace Vere, afterwards Lord Vere of Tilbury, of whom she used to say, that "she honoured him for his valour, but more for the grace of God that shone in him."

In the description given us of Lady Vere's domestic arrangements we may observe the same characteristics that were common to the pious families of that period. We find the same constant habit of family devotion, never interrupted on account of company, and the same rigidly-enforced attendance of the servants at public worship, where "Lady Vere, by her solemn and reverent deportment, would make one believe that there is a God indeed." Not content with those more formal acts of worship, she used to join in the psalms sung at night in the servants' hall, and always prayed with her maids in her own apartment before retiring for the

night. On Sunday evening, also, the household were required to repeat whatever they could remember of the discourses to which they had listened that day. How different was this practice from the criticism of the sermon, with which young people, and even the servants of a family, are now generally edified after their return from church! It must be owned, however, that the other must have been a practice not a little formidable and fatiguing, especially when the hour-glass had been turned before the application of the subject had commenced—an act which Cotton Mather was wont, with grim pleasantry, to style “inviting his congregation to take another glass.”

Lady Vere did not content herself with setting an example of reverence to her domestics in chapel. Far from making it doubtful by selfish inconsideration, or fretful ingratitude, whether their prayers were indeed addressed to the same Heavenly Father, she showed her sense of their Christian brotherhood by courtesy and kindness. “Many a time,” we are told, “when her servants had well performed any business she had set them about, she would thank them for it.”

But yet better than this was her habit of associating them with her in the performance of her acts of mercy; her charity being “as fruit dropping all the year round.” She required them to discover and make known to her any cases of distress that occurred in her neighbourhood. And nothing excited in her such lively displeasure as their failure in this de-

partment of their duty:—" I tell you," she exclaimed on one occasion, when a servant had neglected to inform her of the illness of a poor neighbour, " I tell you, I had rather part with my gown from off my back, than that the poor should want."

Gurnall, who extols her abundant charity, adds to all his praises that of attributing to her the crowning merit of consistency of conduct. " Her religion," he says, " was not like the driven snow, which lies very thick and heavy in one place, and very thin and scanty in another, but it was one universal piety and goodness."

Our confidence in these testimonies to her high merit is a little shaken by the grudging reception which Clarendon seems to imply was accorded by her to the unhappy children of Charles the First, when placed under her care by the Parliament. Still, on the other hand, it has been denied that they were, even for a short time, committed to her.

But, if Lady Vere was flattered by her friends, it was not with her own consent. On the contrary, she not only enjoined, but permitted them to use, the greatest freedom in speaking to her of her faults. For she used to say, that " others might see more by us than we can by ourselves ; " and " that it was a great mercy to be convinced of any sin."

Of Lady Vere in her declining days we have the following notice in Lady Warwick's " Diary :"—
" July 27, 1668. My sister Ranelagh and I went to see my Lady Vere ; and, all the way both going

and coming, we had a great deal of good discourse. She then told me that she had seen much of the world, being now above fourscore and seven years old, and that it was nothing worth, and that Christ was worth all." Once more, in the summer of 1761, Lady Warwick, again accompanied by Lady Ranelagh, visited "my pious Lady Vere." And she then describes herself as having found much comfort from hearing "that good old disciple discourse."

Lady Vere's deep conviction of the world's insufficiency had produced in her an almost impatient desire of death, but its approach was long delayed. She survived her second husband six-and-thirty years. Soon after the date of Lady Warwick's last visit, however, she went down to her grave, full of days and of good deeds.





IV.

Elizabeth Sadler—Her family and early history—Married to Dr. Walker, Chaplain at Lees—His presentation to Fyfield—Held by him during the Commonwealth—Mrs. Walker's autobiography—An old-fashioned Christian—Hospitality to all—Charity to the poor—Loss of her children—Her death.

INTERCOURSE between country neighbours, such as is carried on in the present day, did not in the seventeenth century exist. Ladies with a household to superintend, or a nursery to require their care, had but little time to spend in visits of ceremony, and permitted themselves the relaxation of entertaining company for the most part only at Christmas, and at the other high festivals. But in great houses there was always a throng of poor relations and needy dependants, who swelled the party and occupied the place of nobler guests. Even in a lower rank this species of hospitality was constantly exercised. And thus surrounded by so large a circle in their own homes, ladies were more independent of society without. Other obstacles, too, interposed. When Mrs. Walker, whose story we are approaching, ordered her coach over night to

convey her on a mission of charity a distance of twenty miles, her husband speaks with admiration of the resolution she evinced in facing the difficulties, presented by such a troublesome journey across the country.

Lady Warwick's memorable visit to Easton Lodge, before mentioned, may serve also as a specimen of those perils on the way, encountered by country ladies of that period. But, notwithstanding all this, and Lord Warwick's declining health, which kept his wife for many years in close attendance on him, we find them occasionally visiting their neighbours, and entertaining friends at Lees. One annual visit of theirs has before been spoken of, on the anniversary of the marriage of Dr. Walker, when the Earl and Countess were invariably amongst the guests who assembled at Fyfield Rectory for its celebration.

Moving in a different sphere from the ladies already described, but numbered with them amongst the neighbours of Lady Warwick, was the exemplary wife of Dr. Walker. In the memoir of her, written by her husband, we have a portrait in which George Herbert would have recognized the image he sketched, when designing a wife for his "Country Parson."

Whilst yet chaplain in the family of Lord Warwick, Dr. Walker exchanged duties one Sunday with a neighbouring clergyman, Mr. Beadle of Barnston. In his family there resided at that time a young person, afflicted with a deep constitutional melan-

choly, which undermined her health, and threatened her reason. From her childhood Elizabeth Sadler had been of a grave and thoughtful disposition. She was entrusted by her mother as her little housekeeper, and her father, with whom she was an especial favourite, would not even examine the accounts she kept for him, so assured was he of her accuracy, and her prudent expenditure. In infancy her health had been impaired, in consequence of having been half starved by the nurse, with whom she had been placed in the country. The ailing body dimmed the lustre of the soul within, and lent a tinge of melancholy to her early years ; which, as she grew older, deepened into darker dejection. “ I was,” she says, “ of a pensive nature—God saw it good that I should bear the yoke in my youth.” Childish faults weighed upon her memory as though they had been crimes of deepest dye. She records, though with gratitude for her deliverance, how having been once sent by her mother to her store-room for some fruit, she took up an apple “ good for food, and pleasant to the eyes,” but before even raising it to her lips, she recognized the fault to which she was tempted, and laid it down again untasted. On another occasion, when her father reproved her for an improper expression which she had been reported to him as having employed in a moment of anger, in the agony of shame and remorse, aroused by his rebuke, she denied the offence with which she was charged. Deep was her repentance, and unfeigned her abhorrence of this falsehood, into

which she had been betrayed. Even in after years it was bewailed exceedingly ; and never again to her dying day were her lips sullied by an untruth. But the mind on which failings like these weighed with the sense of heavy guilt was, if in a state of innocence, not in a state of health. Thus predisposed, when mental trials of a peculiar nature assailed her, she fell a helpless victim beneath their power.

During the Civil Wars, her father fearing for her safety if she remained in London, sent her first to some friends in Ipswich, and then to his own family in Warwickshire. They occupied a different position, and led a very different life to that of the wealthy tradesman who had separated himself from them in his youth, and to whose liberality they never appealed in vain. His father, a man of good family, owned some property in the neighbourhood of Stratford-upon-Avon ; but being “ of a free and noble spirit, he somewhat overreached his estate ; ” and, accordingly, his son was expected to improve his fortune by marriage. “ His father having provided him good clothes, a good horse, and money in his purse, sent him to make his addresses to a gentlewoman in that country.” Instead, he resolved on trying his fortune in London, where he had never been before ; and, after infinite difficulty, persuaded a grocer in Bucklersbury to engage him as apprentice ; though he was at this time one-and-twenty years of age, and had but ten pounds in his purse.

His manly endeavour after independence was rewarded as it deserved. All prospered with him ;

and when he entered on business for himself as a druggist, he attained not competence only, but wealth; and was able to please himself, instead of consulting the interests of his family, in marrying the daughter of Mr. Dackum, "sometime minister of Portsmouth."

Their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was made abundantly welcome by her relatives at Stratford, who, besides their obligations to her father, were, doubtless, proud of exercising their hospitality, and of introducing their neighbours to a cousin from London. For town and country were then divided by a broad band of separation. Ladies of wealth and family, as Clarendon relates of his mother, passed through life without even visiting the metropolis; and an importation from thence into a country neighbourhood was considered an object of admiration and attention.

During her absence from home an offer of marriage was refused by Mr. Sadler for his daughter, who confesses herself to have regretted his decision. Afterwards she declined the suit of a gentleman in Warwickshire, who was "very importunate with her for her liking;" but who, though his estate was a temptation to her, failed to engage her affections.

The return to the dull house in Bucklersbury, after the gaiety and novelty of the life at Stratford, was too violent a change for her excitable nerves and variable spirits; and religious melancholy found easy admission, and made a ready prey of her sensitive soul. Painful doubts and imaginations, dis-

honourable to God and to religion, were infused into her mind. Distressed and dismayed, she communicated her state to the minister of her parish; a step that only served to increase her misery. For good Mr. Watson, though full of compassion, was utterly incapable of imparting the consolation she sought. Then, with the terrible power of self-contemplation incident to such morbid conditions of the mind, she beheld herself cut off from every source of human sympathy and relief. Her sufferings she believed peculiar to herself, and such as none had endured before; and the sense of loneliness, imparted by this conviction, froze her spirit with dread. Already she imagined herself a byeword and an object of mockery to others; and, though she had communicated her trial to none but Mr. Watson, she thought that she should "hear books and ballads cried of her about the streets." And whilst she had no place to flee unto, and no man cared for her soul, the black mist of her dejection hid from her the light of heaven. She despaired not of human help only, but of Divine, and questioned in her heart whether there was a God. In her agony she longed that He might be manifested to her in wrath and in majesty, rather than that she might be left in darkness. Her answer came not in the earthquake nor in the storm, but with the still voice of Him Who bade us "consider the lilies."

Of his country tastes, her father had always retained a great love of flowers. His shop was filled

with plants in bloom, cheering his eye in the intervals of business ; and at times these treasures were transferred to the parlour windows above. Thither his unhappy daughter would steal to refresh her weary soul with their " calm loveliness ;" and, gazing one day on a Chalcedon Iris, " full of the impresses of God's curious workmanship," her heart was suddenly lifted in adoring gratitude to Him Who had so clothed it with beauty. The " Ancient Mariner" was not more instantly relieved of his accursed burden when the words of blessing broke from his lips, than she in that hour from the blank wretchedness of Atheism. But the confusion of her thoughts and the tumult of fancy continued. Sleep forsook her. For six months she was never conscious that she slept. Her tears became her meat day and night, for even in taking necessary nourishment she feared to permit herself some sinful gratification.

A ray of light broke in upon her at last. Her father's sister, who was married to his partner in business, " a gracious good woman," had taken notice of her niece's silent suffering, and overtook her as she was returning home from " the morning exercise" in their parish church. By a little judicious questioning she penetrated the cause of her dejection ; and told her how from personal experience she could sympathize with her. It was the first approach to consolation she had yet received ; removing in a measure the terrible sense of isolation that had been growing upon her.

Shortly afterwards her father, becoming alarmed for her health, called in medical aid. This she utterly rejected, telling her physician that it was not of his skill that she stood in need, and forbidding him to see her again. Shrinking from contact with her friends, yet longing for some relief from her misery, she entreated her father to let her withdraw from her family for awhile, and seek a home for herself amongst strangers. His consent being gained to this plan, a retreat was found for her in the house of Mr. Beadle, "an honest, worthy, good man, who was minister of Barnston in Essex." Thither her father accompanied her, commending her most anxiously to the guardianship of her new-found friends, and saying, that "she should not want anything to do her good to the half of his estate." It may be assumed that from her mother she had not hitherto met with much sympathy, for at this time she noted as a special mercy, "my dear mother then was very kind to me." Change of scene and society, the care and consideration of the family with whom she was placed, the quiet of the country, and the increased opportunities for reading and devotion there afforded her, all combined to soothe her perturbed spirits. At the end of six months she returned home, restored to calm, if not to cheerfulness.

Her thoughts were now directed into a new channel. Whilst at Barnston she had formed the acquaintance of Dr. Walker, who was deeply interested in her case; and by no means disposed to let their

acquaintance end with her return home. At first he paid her a "consolatory visit" at her father's house; but the character of these visits changed, after they had been repeated for awhile. On one of these occasions he found himself alone in her parlour, and whilst he walked up and down there, impatiently expecting her appearance, he opened a large folio Bible that lay upon a desk, when his eyes fell upon the words:—"House and riches are inheritance of fathers, and a prudent wife is from the Lord." He had with earnest prayer sought direction in the step he had been meditating, and with such a confirmation of his purpose, he hesitated no longer. Soon afterwards, when he went to buy the wedding-ring, the first which was offered to him had inscribed on it the *posy*:—"Joined in one, by Christ alone!" He sought no further, and fortunately the ring fitted the lady's finger as perfectly as the motto coincided with his taste. They were married at Hammer-smith, in July, 1650.

The bride sought omens of her future fate. "The morning was lowering," she says, "with small rain, and very likely to be a wet day, which was uncomfortable, and much troubled me: but, recollecting myself, my thoughts suggested to me, what is matter for these clouds, if the Sun of Righteousness shine through them on us? I had not got to the water-side, and into the boat, but the sun expelled the clouds to my comfort; it broke forth and shined with that vigour and splendour, that to the best of my observation, which had great impression

on me, I do not know that the sun disappeared one moment that day, from the first time I saw it, to the going down of it, but was as clear and bright a day as ever my eyes beheld." The omen promised truly for her future. "Our whole married life," wrote her husband forty years afterwards, "was like the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, and as clear shining after rain."

They appear, indeed, to have been entirely happy in each other. Where they differed, they never disagreed; and, though he sometimes reproved her for maintaining her own opinion too tenaciously, he had the candour to confess that she was generally in the right. And this, though her conclusions were not always based on the orderly chain of reasoning upon which his own proceeded; as in one instance he relates:—

SHE would often come into my study to me, and when I have asked her, what she would have, she would reply, 'Nothing, my dear, but to ask thee how thou doest, and see if thou wantest anything,' and then, with an endearing smile, would say, 'Dost thou love me?' to which, when I replied, 'Most dearly;' 'I know it abundantly,' she would answer, 'to my comfort, but I love to hear thee tell me so.' And once, when I was adding the reasons of my love, and began, first, for conscience, she stopt me before I could proceed, as she was very quick: 'Ah, my dear, I allow conscience to be an excellent principle in all we do, but like it worst in conjugal affection. I would have thee love me, not because thou must, but because thou wilt, not as a duty, but delight. We are prone to reluctate against what is imposed, but take pleasure in what we choose.'"

Their happiness was nearly coming to a close in the first year of their married life, during which they resided at Croydon. For jail fever, appearing there during the assizes, carried off the judges, some of the magistrates, and many of the inhabitants of the place. Dr. Walker, who was constant in his visits to the unhappy prisoners, the horrors of whose captivity were thus frightfully avenged, was himself attacked by the malady ; from which, however, through the good care taken of him at his father-in-law's, whither he removed from the infected neighbourhood, he happily recovered.

About this time he was presented by the Earl of Warwick to the rectory of Fyfield, where for the rest of his life he resided. At the Restoration an attempt was made to deprive him of the living, which he had retained during the Commonwealth by conforming to the will of the ruling powers. But by the assistance of powerful friends he escaped out of this difficulty. Of this period, or of public affairs in general, scarcely a hint is given in the life of Mrs. Walker. It was chiefly compiled from papers, written during intervals of leisure, which her husband had often observed her slip into the drawer of her writing table, when interrupted by his entrance into her room. On one of these occasions she exacted from him a promise, that he would never look into the contents of that drawer during her lifetime. This promise he faithfully kept. But after her death the " large book in octavo, of the best paper she could buy, neatly bound, gilded, and ruled with

red," was examined, and found to contain an autobiography of the writer; the extracts from which form the most interesting part of the memoir, drawn up by her husband.

A life so uneventful and unvaried presented, indeed, poor materials for a biographer; and when the employment of her time and the rule of her family have been described, little remains to be told. A model to the ladies of her own day, she would hardly meet the standard of modern requirements. Dr. Walker, it is true, endowed a free school at Fyfield, so that there was not one child untaught in the parish. Yet it was to her own children that Mrs. Walker was especially sedulous in imparting Christian principles and useful accomplishments. She theorized, it may be, but little upon the want of thrift and management amongst the lower orders, but her own house was ruled with diligence, and her servants vigilantly superintended. For she both directed and instructed her maids in "cookery, brewing, baking, dairy, ordering linen, in which her neatness was curious, and such like." Her system of almsgiving may not have been very elaborate in its arrangement, but she would rise in the night to assist a neighbour in sickness. She made herself feared as well as loved. Madam Walker, standing up in her pew to frown down whisperers in the sermon, struck awe into the souls of her husband's parishioners. But as many prayers were offered for her by them, as though, to use their own words, "she was a queen." Brought up as she had

been in a town, the control of a country *ménage* would, it was augured by her friends, be likely to fail in her hands. But, neither despising the difficulties that awaited her, nor despairing of overcoming them, she soon mastered all the necessary details of her duties, and belied the unfavourable previsions that had been formed.

The early dawn found her engaged in prayer, and after this dedication of the day to God, at six o'clock she called her maids, heard them read a chapter in the Bible, and then herself superintended their labours; for "though she was neither her own cook, nor dairy-maid, yet was she always clerk of her little kitchen." She afterwards occupied herself with her needle until the hour of family prayer, at which all the labourers on the farm, as well as the household servants, were assembled; and, if any worked by the piece instead of the day, she made up to them by an increase of payment what they had lost in time.

The afternoon she divided between visiting the poor and instructing her children; of whom only two daughters survived their childhood. The accomplishments in which they excelled may excite a smile in the *élèves* of our Ladies' Colleges, but they were those with which Milton endowed the "daughter of God and man, accomplished Eve," when in the bowers of Eden she culled the berry and crushed the grape in preparation for her angelic guest. They learnt from their mother "whatever might fit them for family employments;" for she was

ambitious to impart to them all her own more lately acquired knowledge ; and “ whatever required more art or curiosity for the closet or the parlour, as preserving, drawing spirits in an alembic or cold still, pastry, angelots, and other cream cheese, of which she made many, both for home use and to present to friends,—on her daughters she imposed these matters, to perfect them by practice, in what she had so accurately taught them.” She rivalled Mrs. Primrose herself in her gooseberry wine, reserved for the entertainment of her friends of higher rank ; and for the cider, which won such high encomiums from their acquaintance, she would never allow her husband the smallest credit:—“ *His* cider !” she would between jest and earnest reply, “ ’tis *my* cider. I have all the pains and care, and he hath all the praise, who never meddles with it.”

Lest all this household lore should be lost to her descendants, she caused her daughters to transcribe her best recipes “ for things which were curious, but especially for medicines, with directions how to use them.” For she was skilled both as a physician and surgeon ; and one of her sisters being married to a physician in London, she gained from him many valuable hints, besides what she acquired for herself from the study of Culpepper and other authorities. Part of the day was devoted to visiting the sick, and in preparing the “ distilled waters, syrups, oils, ointments, and salves,” with which her closet was more fully furnished than many a country shop. And both in their preparation and

distribution her daughters were expected to lend their aid. A portion of their time was, besides, employed in needlework ; and in this branch of their education their mother, though she was as well skilled as if she had been brought up in a convent, was always assisted by a servant, whom she had herself trained for the purpose. But, as far as possible, she kept her children under her own guidance ; though she had a foreign master residing in the house for a time, to teach them languages, and they received lessons occasionally in singing and writing from other instructors. They were taught to read as soon as they could speak, and their mother devoted much care to make good readers of them. In this attainment she excelled ; and to the skilful modulation of her voice, and to her judicious emphasis in reading, Dr. Walker gives high praise. This accomplishment is now but little prized. Yet the author of " Friends in Council " has declared it as his conviction, that " most mothers could hardly devote themselves to a more important thing in the education of their children than teaching them to read."

For the use of her children, when very young, Mrs. Walker composed an easy First Catechism. But when they could say the Church Catechism perfectly, they were called upon to repeat it in church, that " the meaner sort might be ashamed not to send their children, and the poor children might be quickened and encouraged by their example and company."

Their mother was accustomed to give them a

little reward in money for any psalms or chapters out of the Bible, which they committed to memory. This was less to incite them to learn, than that they might by their diligence have something of their own to bestow upon the poor in charity. And that the practice of benevolence might abide in them with the force of early habit, the beggar at the door was invariably relieved by the hand of one or other of the children.

In the evening they always accompanied their mother to their father's study for religious instruction. When they were dismissed, the husband and wife united in prayer; after this she would herself bring him his evening meal—a service which she never allowed a domestic to perform for her, “because she would not lose the pleasure and satisfaction of expressing her tender and endeared affection.” For herself a very slight repast sufficed; as her abstemiousness was so great that dinner was the only meal of which she regularly partook. The whole of Friday she spent in religious retirement, and this day she gave up to her maids for their own work, and that, if they pleased, they might employ more time in prayer and devotion. An hour in the evening before family prayer she dedicated to their instruction, and rewarded them with little presents to encourage them in learning the lessons set them. She gave to each of them also a Bible as soon as they could use it, the book being “of double the price for which she might have bought it.” One of her rules was always to

buy the best of everything, yet she was not above the pride and pleasure of making a bargain; except when the person of whom she bought was poor, when she invariably gave the full price asked, whatever it was. After family prayer, and whilst she was preparing to retire to rest, one of her maids read to her a chapter in the Bible; and the day, opened with prayer, was closed with praise. And thus

“The trivial round, the common task,”

became to her, indeed, a path by which God's loving Spirit led her forth into the land of righteousness.

Such was her ordinary course of life, except when Sunday brought relief from its monotony, and rest from its labours. Great was the contrivance exercised by her during the week, that no worldly business should encroach upon the sanctity of the day. “Her maids were never allowed to make a cheese that day; and she would seldom use the coach to carry her to church except in extremity of way and weather.” Though none gave a warmer welcome to her friends on other days, yet on this, if any uninvited intruded themselves, she escaped as soon as she could with civility from their company. Many a sick neighbour, however, she cheered with a Sunday visit in the interval between the services. When she walked to church she was always accompanied by all her servants, “that they might not stay loitering idly at home or by the way.” In the

evening she gathered her family round her for religious instruction.

So from week to week her life glided quietly on, varied occasionally by friendly visits given and received, by a journey to Tunbridge Wells every summer, and by the festivities of Christmas, when the whole parish, rich and poor, old and young, were feasted for three days at the Rectory. On the anniversary of their wedding-day Dr. and Mrs. Walker entertained their neighbours of higher degree; and the Earl of Warwick's family was generally included amongst their guests. On one occasion "three coroneted heads, and others of best quality, next to nobility," were numbered in the company. For this feast the venison was always supplied from Lees Priory. On the table there was conspicuously placed a dish of pies, prepared by Mrs. Walker, their number corresponding with the years of her married life. On the last anniversary a perfect pyramid appeared—thirty-nine in one dish, all "made," as we are told, "by the hand which received a wedding-ring so many years before."

On the day following this and other entertainments, the door used to be besieged by persons who sought advice and remedies for invalids. Their peculiar maladies were well understood by Mrs. Walker, who used to send home the applicants well supplied with a store of good things, which she used laughingly to assure them would cure all their ailments. She would herself send for those too modest to employ the *ruse* which their neighbours found so

successful; and she did not let them on this account lose their share in the feast. The remains of it, after the household servants and labourers had had their share, were thus entirely distributed amongst the poor.

This, perhaps, was a more expedient mode of obeying the Gospel directions for feasting, than by inviting rich and poor to the same table: though the command, as we have seen, was at Christmas literally fulfilled; no difference at that time being apparently made in their reception. The children alone were placed at a table by themselves; and when the parents proffered excuses for bringing them, Mrs. Walker would tell them she loved to have them about her:—"They are as welcome as yourselves, though you be very welcome."

To the parishioners of Fyfield her hand, indeed, was always open. The rent of a small farm, worth £19 a year, was given to her by her husband; and besides this, what by her thrift she could spare from the profits of certain departments of their own farm, after supplying the family, was added to her little store, the whole amounting to about £23 in the year. Every half year on receiving her rent she laid aside nine and sixpence in her "poor man's box" for lesser alms; but the whole amount of her charities in the year exceeded the half of what she received, as she rarely spent more than seven or eight pounds upon herself. Yet, as Dr. Walker proudly avers, she was always well dressed, though she never appeared but in black; and was as exquisitely

neat and delicate in her own apparel as she expected her daughters to be in theirs. She used to tell them that this was in some measure "a sign and evidence of inward purity; and that though all neat people were not good, yet almost all good people were neat." What she might have lavished upon herself she preferred to impart to others. If she was simply attired, her poor neighbours were all the more comfortably clad. She had wool spun and made up into cloth, which was afterwards converted into clothing for them; and on the birth of every infant in the parish the mother was presented with a blanket; so that we may well believe the assurance of one poor woman, who told her that she never woke in the night without praying for her. She found work for any who were in need of it, though she might not require their services; and, whilst supplying nourishment for the body, she did not withhold food for the mind. She gave away a great many books in the course of the year; and, until a free school was opened in the parish, she herself paid for the schooling of several poor children.

But her charity was not confined to the limits of her own home and neighbourhood. The poor at Tunbridge Wells were also recipients of her bounty; and to the French Protestants she gave liberally at different times. One of their refugees lived for two years at Fyfield Rectory; and for the next four years at Cambridge, until he took his degree, Dr. Walker entirely supported him. Of all this expenditure:

Mrs. Walker heartily approved; for she used to say to her husband:—"I think none of our estate so well laid out, as what is laid out so; nor any part kept so safe, as what is deposited in God's hand, and committed to His keeping."

It is almost impossible not to suspect her of having been the governing power at the Rectory. Quick and vivacious in manner, slight in form, and agile in her movements, with a character marked by decision and energy, she formed her conclusions rapidly, and as rapidly acted upon them. She had a store of pithy maxims ever at hand, and, as we all know, there is no appeal from a maxim. Whilst holding it her duty to speak plainly, she often repented of having spoken hastily, and would even ask her servants' forgiveness when her speech had been unkind and unjust. But her husband's place she held to be in his study, whilst Martha's lot was hers. When they entertained, as they often did, their friends, if he alluded to the preparations for their reception, she used to quietly dismiss his counsels, saying, "I pray thee, let me alone; trouble not thyself; let me but know whom thou invitest, and leave the rest to me." And if there were any "family affairs that gave more trouble and bustle," she availed herself of his absence from home to get them accomplished without annoyance to him. With all her energy and activity, she had too deep a sense of the blessings of retirement and quiet not to endeavour to procure them for another, to whom she knew them to be essential.

It was through the divine communion, sought and found in the stillness of the early morning, that she gained strength for the duties and trials of the day; and by converting her yearly visits to Tunbridge into a religious retreat, she tried to prevent her domestic cares and worldly concerns from assuming an aspect of undue importance in her mind. And thus, "she spiritualized her worldly business; behaved in her family, as became one who was of the family of the first-born; made all her employments a sacrifice, by performing them in obedience to God, Whose Providence imposed them on her, in setting her in a station in which they were required of her; not only submitting to them as mortifications, but with a willing mind cheerfully engaging in them; accounting all as done to God, which His appointment made her duty."

The interests and employments of a life thus occupied allowed no place for the dejection of her early days; but from heavy and heart-rending trials she was not exempt. "Great affections, great afflictions," was a favourite saying of hers; and its truth was exemplified in her own experience. Of eleven children only three survived their infancy. The youngest of these, a little girl, named Mary, died when she was about six years old, after a short illness. She is described by her mother with a simple pathos, taught only by love and sorrow, as a gentle, docile child, "of a pretty presence, not bold, but of an innocent confidence." She was very studious, and would hardly allow herself time for

her meals ; so eager was she to return to her book. On winter evenings she used to sit reading by her mother's side, and the hour-glass before them used to be turned more than once, whilst she remained absorbed in her quiet enjoyment. But the loss of this little one was a less bitter trial, than that of her elder sister Elizabeth, a lovely and interesting girl, who died, at the age of sixteen, of small-pox. On her death-bed she asked that some money she had might be given to the poor, and that what could be saved out of the expense of her funeral might be bestowed in the same way. Deeply impressed, as her mother was, with the high honour of having been entrusted with the care of bringing up children for her God, it was not without a severe struggle that she could resign them into His hand, Who reclaimed them from her.

Her whole affections now concentrated themselves with redoubled force on her last surviving daughter, Margaret ; " the child of her choice affections," as she used to call her. She was beloved by high and low. Her gentleness and ready sympathy won her the hearts of all her poorer neighbours ; and she was the favourite companion of Lady Warwick's nieces, with whom much of her time was passed. In January, 1675, Mrs. Walker entered among her memoranda how her husband and dear child went up to London, in reference to " our great concern, her marriage, our only one, so dear to us." And the following month her marriage with Mr. John Cox, barrister, of Gray's Inn, was entered, accom-

panied by the notice of Lady Warwick and the chief of the family from Warwick House being amongst the wedding guests. It was scarcely a year before their joy was turned into mourning; for the young wife was taken away, leaving to her afflicted mother the care of her infant son.

Overwhelmed by this shock, the gloom that darkened her early days returned upon her with all but irresistible might. Bodily indisposition prolonged this season of trial, during which she shed such torrents of tears as even to impair her sight. But, by Divine mercy, the trials that crowd upon our closing days have it not in their power to inflict the deadly anguish of those that embitter youth.

And thus this much-tried Christian, though perplexed, was not in despair. Her thoughts, too, were now diverted from her own sufferings by works of mercy and by care for others. At one time she was roused to extraordinary exertion and excitement by the peril incurred by her husband, when, during Monmouth's rebellion, in 1685, he was on some suspicion arrested, and confined for ten days as a prisoner in Tilbury Fort. Her efforts were crowned with success, and won her the approval of those who were otherwise unfriendly. A more peaceful interest she found in the education of her little grandson, who remained under her care until about two months before her death; which occurred, after a short illness, Feb. 27th, 1690, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. Her last words were a request addressed to her husband, as he left her to

perform the service in the church:—"A short prayer, my dear, before thou goest." And thus she passed from the earthly to the eternal Sabbath, having laboured that she might enter into that rest.

Over a life, made up of such simple details and homely pursuits, it is not allowable to linger; and, perhaps, the lengthy and rather prosy reflections, with which Dr. Walker overlaid the Memoir, prevented it from becoming popular.

One or two attempts have been made to republish it, but they have not been attended with success. Yet, as a portrait of an "old-fashioned Christian," and as admitting us to a nearer view of life in an old-fashioned parsonage, it is worthy of a better fate.





HOME-LIFE OF ENGLISH LADIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE TRIALS OF MARGARET BAXTER AND
MRS. BASIRE.

I.

Sufferings of ejected clergy and non-conforming ministers—
Religious society at Kidderminster—Margaret Charlton
resides there with her mother—Her early trials—Her ac-
quaintance and friendship with Richard Baxter—Their
marriage and difficulties—Mrs. Baxter's courage and charity
—Her death.

IN contemplating the peaceful parsonage
of Fyfield, its simple pleasures, and its
homely cares, it is hardly possible to
realize how dark a sky lowered above
it, and how wild a tempest swept around. An easy
indifference to ritualism, with a decided leaning to
Calvinistic doctrine, enabled Dr. Walker to retain
his living during the Commonwealth. And after-
wards, when trouble threatened at the Restoration,
he had powerful patrons to protect him, and in-
fluential friends to plead his cause. But others
there were of more rigid principles and less yielding

convictions. To them the rapid transfer of authority, and the revolution of opinion, brought disaster and inevitable ruin. In the families of the seven thousand ejected clergy how many an uncrowned martyr endured an agony of unrecorded woe ! How many sunk down, worn out in the strife, before once more, with the return of the Stuarts, hope and gladness dawned on the survivors ! But then fresh anguish awaited those, whom the Act of Uniformity compelled to choose between faithfulness to their opinions, and tenderness to their worldly interests. Of these a considerable proportion preferred the first alternative. And thus misery and destitution again blighted many a life, and darkened many a hearth.

Amongst the earlier sufferers Mrs. Basire can be but slightly noticed, as her history can only be sketched from those of her letters that have been preserved in her husband's correspondence. But in the "*Breviate of the Life of Margaret Baxter*" we have a fuller narrative of similar troubles, borne courageously by "a tender and delicate woman," whose sensibility of nature enhanced fourfold every hardship she endured.

Baxter had been labouring zealously for many years in the parish of Kidderminster, when he was requested to take a house there for a lady, desirous of being included in his flock. This was Mrs. Hammer, whose first husband, Mr. Charlton, was a gentleman of fortune and family in Shropshire. Some domestic disagreements made her anxious to

retire from her son's house, in which, until his marriage, she had resided, managing his estates, and conducting his very intricate affairs with equal firmness and discretion. Her continuance in his family being now no longer desirable, she determined on finding a home, where she might enjoy some repose from the cares and engagements which from the time of her first widowhood had beset her. Baxter felt the difficulty of his position, when thus called upon to aid in the separation of a mother from her only son, and he endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose. But she found other agents less scrupulous, who, without letting him know of this commission, engaged a house for her as she directed.

Mrs. Hanmer's was one of those severe, resolute natures, often tried with the keenest strokes of adversity. So that we are disposed to question, whether the trials are sent to soften the hardness of the character, or whether its strength was granted in foresight of the coming woe. Mrs. Charlton's first husband resided at Apperley Castle, only a few miles from Eaton-Constantine. In this village Richard Baxter, "the son of a mean Free-holder, called a gentleman for his ancestors' sake," passed his youth. He often heard of Francis Charlton in those days, as one "of the Justices of the Peace in the county, a grave, and sober, worthy man." At his death his widow was left with three young children, of whom the guardianship was pertinaciously contested by her husband's brother.

In order to have an advocate to plead her cause against him with the King, she married Mr. Hammer. Upon this her opponent had recourse to more violent measures ; and contrived to have a detachment of Parliamentary troops directed against Apperley Castle, then held by a garrison. By them the castle was taken, and partially destroyed. Its defenders were killed, and the family plundered to such an extent, that even for necessary articles of clothing they were obliged to be dependent upon the charity of their neighbours. The children, too, were carried off by their uncle ; and on the youngest girl, Margaret, though a mere child at the time, these scenes of violence left an indelible impression. They probably contributed much to that apprehensive timidity which caused extreme suffering to her in after life. Such foibles were certainly not inherited from her mother. Undaunted by defeat, she contrived to regain possession of her children. And over them from henceforth she exercised an authority, less tempered, perhaps, by discretion than marked by determination. They certainly feared more than they loved her. At last, having again become a widow, she resolved to separate herself wholly from them.

Her varied experience had taught her a contempt of the world. Its pleasures offered her no allurements ; and its restraints she regarded as an irksome bondage. The turmoil of business and the strife of tongues, in which a great part of her life had been painfully consumed, were therefore gladly ex-

changed by her for a course of almsdeeds, and the pious conversation of some lowly friends in the country town of Kidderminster. She was profusely liberal to all in need, and Baxter was never so near incurring her displeasure as when he failed to acquaint her with any case of distress that fell under his notice. But she made a bolder step yet in her renunciation of the world. She trod under-foot, not its pleasures only, but its pride. She chose for her friends, and associated familiarly with, persons whose inferiority of station was more than atoned for in her eyes by the piety, that formed the theme of their conversation, as it was the bond of their mutual intercourse.

Upon this sober circle a dazzling apparition dawned—Margaret Charlton, Mrs. Hanmer's youngest daughter, now about eighteen or nineteen, and resembling a heroine of one of the romances in which she delighted. She was drawn thither by a sense of filial duty to a mother, who had never shown her any partiality. For her sake she quitted a sphere of luxury and refinement, far more in accordance with her habits and tastes than the "poverty and strictness" with which she now, for the first time, made acquaintance. It must have cost her no slight pang, however, when she exchanged her early home for the gloomy house in Kidderminster—a large rambling old tenement, looking into the churchyard, and half in ruins from the rude assaults made on it in the recent wars. Strangely out of keeping with the grave company who resorted there, was

the presence of that new inmate of the dreary mansion. "Glittering in costly apparel," flashing forth sallies of "strangely vivid wit," which won regretful admiration from John Howe, she closed reluctantly the pages of *Cassandra* or *Clélie* to converse with "the honest poor weavers," whom her mother gathered around her, or to assist at the hospitalities of some worthy minister.

Holding herself rather aloof from all, though more from reserve than pride, of which it wore the semblance, grave and sedate in her deportment, yet sparkling and brilliant in conversation, when she could be roused to animation, it must have been less with admiration than awe that she inspired her new acquaintances. Amongst them the hard-featured, hard-working minister of Kidderminster would, we might have thought, have been treated as distantly as the rest. Not so, however. In him she recognized one, who, whatever his social attributes or position, was, by the force of his powerful intellect and the might of his plain but fervent eloquence, lifted far above the level of ordinary men, and to be judged by a different standard from theirs. But, above all, she confessed the power of his exalted and unaffected piety, and felt that, however she stood in comparison to the rest of her associates, here was one whom she could not venture to despise. Doubtless, the deep veneration in which Baxter was held by his flock, who regarded him even as an angel, may have helped her to a more vivid appreciation of his excellence than under other

circumstances she would have attained. For the hero-worship of a small society is an influence hardly to be resisted. But, besides, a peculiar bond of sympathy existed between them. Baxter had encountered the assaults of scepticism, and had come forth from the conflict unscathed. This trial Margaret Charlton, too, endured, and the tone of her mind on many points harmonized with his. One especial source of the ascendancy he had gained over his congregation was found in his careful personal instruction of the families of which it was composed. To Margaret Charlton in her doubts and perplexities he came as a heaven-sent guide.

She was unhappy both in herself and in her circumstances. Indeed, her nature was one predestined to disappointment. She had formed an ideal of excellence, which she was distressed to find unfulfilled in her own experience, and contradicted by the conduct of others. Her education had been entrusted to one, whose rigid rule had coerced the timid spirit of her pupil into an outward submission, whilst it roused all the ardour of her nature to inward revolt. Her mother, to whom she might naturally have turned for sympathy, was not likely to engage her confidence. Parental affection never biassed her judgment, which was as inflexibly exact for her own children as for the merest strangers. The "manlike" patience with which she sustained her heavy afflictions little fitted her to sympathize with those sufferings of the imagination, beneath which her daughter sighed. Although her quick

violent temper was by the strong power of religious principle held in control, yet to such a "delicate spirit" as Margaret's, to whom a loud voice brought pain, even its repressed tokens must have caused acute suffering.

Thus repelled into reserve, and subdued into sadness, surrounded by society wholly alien to her taste, Margaret Charlton lived apart. Silent in company, in solitude she wove glorious dreams to herself of a world that never has been, and never shall be until life's discipline is accomplished, and its lesson learnt. A vague sense of unhappiness possessed her, and a longing to attain a blessedness that lay far beyond her grasp. She had always revered goodness in others, and a sermon she heard at Oxford whilst on a visit to her sister, who was married to one of the canons of Christ Church, deeply impressed her with the necessity of choosing the good part. But it was Baxter's teaching, and especially his views of conversion, received "on her heart as the seal on the wax," that irrevocably fixed her choice. By them she was led to prayer and self-examination; her murmurs were converted into confessions; her severe judgment of others into condemnation of herself. In an empty chamber, that lay beyond the ruined part of the mansion, she sought a place for herself where she might weep. A death's head was the ornament of her oratory, and here she poured forth her soul to Him, Who in all our afflictions was afflicted.

The comfort even of this retreat was destroyed.

A favourite servant of her mother, who, if she was, as we are assured, "very pious," was also very impertinent, made it her business to discover how her young lady spent those long lonely hours, in which she was missing from the family circle. Catching the tender plaints which the overburdened spirit breathed to no human ear, she repeated the result of her investigations to her mistress, who related it to her friends. And they, congratulating her on the happy change, received the returning penitent with an ostentation of joy, that must have caused unspeakable pain to one who kept silence even from good words, lest she should offend against truth, and seem better than she was. To one of so keen and ready a perception, and so morbidly sensitive in her disposition, such want of tact must, indeed, have been unusually annoying.

Nor were there wanting graver cares that strewed her path with anything but roses. Time had worn on since first she came to Kidderminster; and the imaginative, romantic girl was ripening into a thoughtful, enthusiastic woman. "All the operations of her soul," says Baxter, "were very intense and strong; strong wit, strong love, strong displeasure." In her heart an affection, once kindled, might not with many waters be quenched. The sequel of her story is well known. The hand, that had pointed out to her the path to heaven, she learnt to lean upon as her earthly guide; and, if for awhile the sentiment veiled itself under the garb of reverence for a spiritual teacher, an hour arrived in which

she awoke to a full consciousness of its nature and its power. The discovery for her was fraught with pain. The obstacles that interposed between them were sufficiently apparent. Disparity of rank and fortune, as well as of age and character, divided them. But, above all, she had to endure self-reproach for having permitted earthly feelings to intrude into the relations that bound them. Of this she wrote :—" I begin already to be sensible of my misusing the helps which God had given me ; I know now, how I should love ordinances and means of grace, and to what end ; not to break my heart when Providence removeth them from me, or me from them ; but I should love them for God, and use them for Him, and expect my greatest comfort from Him, and not from men and means themselves. This is no more than what I thought I had known long ago, but I never knew it, indeed, until now." But the lesson was no easy one to learn ; and bodily indisposition was now added to mental infirmity. Her life, which had before been many times endangered, was now despaired of.

In the pious congregation of Kidderminster it was no unusual practice, to hold prayer-meetings for the restoration of its sick members. Accordingly, for Margaret Charlton's recovery it was proposed that a special day of prayer should be observed. One feature distinguished this assembly from all that had preceded it. In those Baxter had never joined. In this his presence was to be remarked. " I was with them at prayer for this

woman," he wrote, "and compassion made us all extraordinarily fervent."

Their prayer was answered by her speedy recovery, and to celebrate it a day of thanksgiving was appointed. With firm resolutions and earnest prayer Margaret Charlton prepared to join in the solemnities of the day. But on an occasion which should have been one of such holy joy, she was distressed at finding herself overpowered with sadness. Alone, in the silence of her chamber, she had calmly confessed "the vanity of the creature," and steadfastly dismissed all "false hopes" from her heart. But these morning meditations were to be numbered amongst those

"Vows too pure to be perform'd,
And prayers blown wild by gales of care ;"

that sadden the recollections of the past, and cloud the anticipations of the morrow. She had suddenly learnt that Baxter was about to quit Kidderminster for a time, and was dismayed to find that her deepest convictions and most steadfast purposes were unavailing to soften the pang which this prospect occasioned her. In the reflections which she wrote at the close of the day, she reverted again and again to her sorrow at parting from her "dear friend, her father, her pastor." She reproached herself that she had so little profited by his teaching, and resolved that, if restored to her again, it should be more duly improved; and, it may be, recalling the lessons of her teacher, she continued:—"The

whole world is but a house where God's children dwell a little while, till He hath fitted them for the heavenly mansions; and, if He send them out of one room into another to do His work and try their obedience, and if He put some of them into the darkest corners of His house to keep them humble, though He separate those that are most beloved of each other, it is but that they may not love so much as to be loth to part, and come to Him, Who should have all their love."

The trial, against which she thus armed herself, does not appear to have been of long duration. But the dejection which it first occasioned her was not removed with the cause of it. Yet the circumstances of her life were in many respects far happier than they had been. Though herself of an undemonstrative nature, she did not the less prize the manifestations of affection in others. Of these a large measure was now allotted her. Her mother, since the change in her religious views, from caring less for her than for her other children, had now come to love her best of all. And thus she reaped the reward of her steady adherence to her duty, when she exchanged her brother's home for the poverty and obscurity of her mother's life in Kidderminster. But, besides this, her restoration from the brink of the grave aroused a tender interest in her amongst all her friends. Baxter has preserved for the amusement, if not for the admiration of posterity, a copy of verses, composed to celebrate the event, by her cousin, Mr. Eleazar Careswell of Sheffnall,

“whom,” he says, “I never knew to poetize but now that tender love and passion taught him; it signifieth these, though it want the flowery part.” This precious composition is headed by an anagram on her name, Margaret Charlton, which is transposed into the not very intelligible exhortation, “Arm to later change!” And in the concluding lines of the poem it is again emphatically enforced:—

“Rise then, my soul; thy thoughts from earth estrange,
The first is wrought, Arm to thy later change.”

If the oracular Eleazar’s composition elicited a smile from his pensive cousin, it quickly vanished again; and, her dejection continuing, the “only friend” to whom she confided her troubles attempted to reason with her upon it. His arguments were, she confessed, unanswerable, but they were unavailing. Yet, animated as she was with a sense of gratitude for the preservation of her life, just as she had begun to learn how truly to live, she renewed her resolutions of a cheerful performance of duty, and earnest care for the good of others. But, perhaps, her best resolution of all was the determination, to which she arrived, of leaving Kidderminster for London. To this, however, Baxter opposed himself; as unwilling, at least, to be deprived of her society, as she was to part from him. When she communicated her intention to him, she apparently advanced some family circumstances as those which had determined her on this step. But from his counsels, which she transcribed, and the

prayers, which at her request he offered for her, it would seem that he had at this time discovered some of the reasons which weighed with her.

The following are some of the subjects of his prayer, which throw much light upon the character of her for whom they were offered :—

“ I WILL pray,” he wrote, “ that you may be much less tender and liable to commotion and disquiet of mind, and less sensible of unkindness and of bodily dangers, yea of sin itself, whilst the sense of it hinders the sense of mercy. A meek, and a quiet, and a patient spirit is of great price in the sight of God. I will pray that you may be delivered from too much inward passion of fear, grief, or discontent.

“ I will pray that no creature may seem greater, better, or more regardable or necessary to you than it is ; and that you would look on all as walking shadows, vanity and liars, (that is untrusty,) further than you can see God in them, or they lead you up to Him ; that they may never be over-loved, over-feared, over-trusted, or their thoughts too much regarded.

“ Above all, I'll pray that you may be less self-willed, and not be too passionately or unreasonably set upon the fulfilling of all your will ; but may have a will that is compliant with the Will of God, and can change as He would have it, and will follow Him, and not run before Him ; and can endure to be crossed and denied by God and man without discomposedness and impatient troubles of mind.

“ I shall pray that seeming wisdom may not entangle you, either in the concealment of anything which greatly needeth your friend's advice, or in the hiding of your talents by unprofitable silence, as to all good discourse, upon the enmity which you have to hypocrisy ; and that you will not live in sins of omission, for fear of seeming

better than you are. By this you may know wherein I think you faulty."

To these plain counsels her own words, with which she closed the paper containing them, furnish the best comment:—"Our dearest friends must be our greatest grief; and when we begin in hope, and love, and joy, before we are aware, we fall into an answerable measure of distress. Learn by experience, when any condition is inordinately or excessively sweet to thee, to say—'From hence must be my sorrow.'"

In one sense, though not that in which she anticipated, her foreboding was to be fulfilled. It was not through their separation but their union that the troubles, which she had long apprehended, overtook her. Her counsellor had warned her, that her sufferings would be increased by interesting her in all the dangers and troubles of those whom she overloved; and his words were verified, when the Restoration overthrew that which for many years had been the dominant religious party in England. How prominent Baxter's name is amongst those who attempted an adjustment of the difficulties which beset the question of Church government and discipline, is well known. He was called upon to assist at the conference of the Savoy, and quitted his charge at Kidderminster for a time, as he believed, but, as it eventually proved, for a permanence. Mrs. Hanmer followed him to London, and took a house there, where she resided with her

daughter ; who entered with eager interest into the important discussions then pending. It was her unhesitating advice to Baxter, that he should decline the Bishopric of Hereford ; although, as he observes, his acceptance of it might have removed the objections of her relatives to their marriage, which was at this time in contemplation, but by which they thought that she would debase herself. Their opposition was, doubtless, included in the many obstacles to which he refers as having delayed the *dénouement* of this curious history. But, if her friends opposed, his own condemned him. And not to them only had he to vindicate himself ; for in taking this step he was acting in direct contradiction to his own avowed opinions. But a scheme projected on paper, or a theory elaborated in the study, does not always prove a trustworthy horoscope of the actual life. In this case many unusual circumstances occurred, which would, we are assured, if fully known, have justified both parties in the course which they pursued. It was not, however, until the Act of Uniformity had deprived him of his pastoral charge, and driven him forth from the scenes of his pious labours, that, amidst a gloomy present and a threatening future, Margaret Charlton became his wife, in September 1662, when he was in his forty-seventh year, and she scarcely three-and-twenty.

From her mother we may believe she met with cordial approval ; as she, we are told, “ very much preferred the spiritual welfare of her children before

their temporal ; looking on the former as the true felicity, and on the latter, without it, but as a pleasant voluntary misery." And in committing her child into hands she so revered, she may have felt that there was every prospect of her best interests being advanced, however little promise the future held out for those of a temporal nature. In the interval, however, between her daughter's contract and her marriage, she was carried off by fever. In her funeral sermon, preached by Baxter, and printed at her daughter's request, it is evident that he especially addressed himself to one of her children, when proposing her to all of them as an example :—

" SHE was none of those," he said, " that are suspicious of God, and are still concluding death and ruin from all that He doth to them, and are gathering wrath from misinterpreted expressions of His love : who weep because of the smoke before they can be warmed by the fire. She expected the morning in the darkest night ; and judged not the end by the beginning. She was not a murmurer against God, nor one that contended with her Maker ; nor one that created calamity to herself by a self-troubling, unquiet mind. She patiently bore what God laid upon her, and made it not heavier by the additions of uncomfortable prognostics, and misgiving or repining thoughts. And thus in one of the weaker sex, God hath showed us that it is possible to live in holy confidence, and peace, and quietness of mind, without distressing griefs or fears, even in the midst of a troublesome world and of vexatious businesses, and with the afflictions of her dearest relations almost continually before her. And that our quiet or disquiet, our peace or trouble dependeth more upon our inward strength and temper, than upon our outward state, occasions, or provo-

cations. And that it is more in our hands, than of any or all our friends and enemies, whether we shall have a comfortable or an uncomfortable life. What remaineth now, but that all we that survive, especially you that are her children, do follow her as she followed Christ ? ”

The pattern thus proposed was not copied only, but surpassed. From this time the character of Margaret Baxter developed into one of heroic fortitude and saintly patience. She, who had trembled at an angry voice, now encouraged her husband to endure contempt and reproach. If she yet shrunk from the apprehension of imaginary dangers, in the presence of real peril she maintained an appearance of perfect composure. The heart, that had dwelt too exclusively on its own emotions, was expanded to the requirements of the most extended charity. And, though inured by early habit no less than by refinement of taste to “ all the sweet civilities of life,” she submitted unrepiningly to the discomforts and privations incident to the unsettled existence which the severity of the laws, in force against the nonconformists, imposed upon them.

Their case, however, was not as hard as that of many of their friends, who were reduced to deepest destitution. For a time poverty was not amongst their trials. For, though Baxter, to clear himself from all suspicion of mercenary motives in his marriage, refused to accept more than a moiety of his wife’s fortune, they were yet able to extend help to many in need ; and she would sometimes upbraid her husband for having through his scruples lessened

her power of doing good. After only a short residence in London, they retired to Acton. Here Baxter conferred with Sir Matthew Hale "about the immortality of the soul, and other philosophical and foundation points;" and his wife, happy that his talents were again allowed full scope, gladly received to her house the congregation who, in the interval between the Church services, attended his ministry, in a large room set apart for that purpose. But, whilst zealous for his honour, she still retained the modest diffidence that had marked her early life. She would never join in the religious discussions, which, in that age of controversy, were held to be a sure evidence of spiritual vitality. Nay, though she would privately instruct her servants, she could never summon courage to conduct family prayers in the absence of her husband.

Yet, whilst thus distrustful of her own powers, her quickness of apprehension and soundness of judgment were to him unfailing subjects of admiration. "She would at the first hearing," he said, "understand the matter better than I could do by very long thoughts;" and, whilst clever and apt in the transaction of business, he declares her to have been no less endowed by nature as a casuist. "Except in cases that required learning and skill in theological difficulties, she was better at resolving a case of conscience than most divines that ever I knew in all my life. I often submitted cases to her, which she so suddenly resolved, as to convince me of some degree of oversight in my own resolution." Hence

for years, except in secret cases, he referred all to her for decision. Thus zealously concerned for his fulfilment of his office, and fitted to share in the labours of his mind, she was not deficient in the minor graces that refine and soften the daily path of life. Her love of music is mentioned with approbation ; but the fastidious delicacy that pervaded all her household arrangements was, Baxter confesses, more appreciated by others than by himself: for he considered “ so much ado about cleanliness and trifles was a sinful curiosity, and expence of servants’ time, who might that while have been reading some good book. But she, that was otherwise bred, had somewhat other thoughts.”

If, however, “ so much washing of stairs and rooms” interfered with the tranquillity of his studies, it was his wife who rescued his library when it was in danger of being dispersed, and imparted an air of home even to the cell of a prison. For, information having been given of the conventicle held in his house at Acton, Baxter was apprehended, and confined in the common jail of Clerkenwell. Thither his wife accompanied him to share and cheer his captivity. When released, it was but to face fresh tribulation. The Five Mile Act, which had been lately passed, precluded their return to Acton, and they now fixed on Totteridge as a resting-place. Here they were domiciled in a smoky farm-house, where even in winter they were compelled to sit with open windows. But her cheerfulness and contentment never forsook her ; she even blamed her

husband for having mentioned in print their losses, saying, they should rather be thankful with wonder for the great mercy they yet enjoyed.

After some further changes, they removed, in 1673, to London, where they had a house in Southampton Square. Mrs. Baxter had formerly opposed the idea of her husband's preaching in London, lest the congregations of other ministers should be withdrawn from them by his eloquence. But, now that the excitement which had attended the religious revolution in the country had somewhat subsided, she was unwearied in her endeavours to procure for others the privilege which she so highly valued. After having by some guileless diplomacy ascertained that the field of labour which he would especially choose, was amongst "the new buildings at St. James's, where neighbours many lived like Americans," she hired, through the help of a friend, a room over the market-house. Here Baxter preached in the morning; and in the afternoon "the ablest ministers they could procure in London." To supply their places to their congregations Mrs. Baxter engaged a minister from the country at £40 a year, who preached every Sunday to the flock deserted by its pastor in consequence of this arrangement. The roof of the market-house falling in on the congregation, caused this scheme to be abandoned. Undiscouraged by this failure, she now resolved from her own resources to build a room, where the congregation that was gathering around her husband might assemble. But this and many similar

attempts were opposed, and finally frustrated. Fresh trials now crowded upon her. The "joy of doing good" was one in which she had, hitherto, indulged herself without restraint. Wherever she went she abounded in works of charity. She established a school for the poor children of St. James's Parish; put many out in different trades; and rendered assistance to those who were endeavouring to rescue Wales from ignorance and irreligion. Whilst bountiful to strangers, she was not neglectful of nearer ties, but was a warm and liberal friend to the poor kinsmen of her husband. She would, indeed, fain have given to all who asked, and utterly repudiated the idea of limiting benevolence by the bounds of prudence. This lavish generosity combined with other causes to reduce them to extreme poverty; and she, whose hand had always been open to those in need, was now herself compelled to accept of charity. Still, though she would receive even from her own friends only sufficient to supply bare necessities, she was an indefatigable petitioner for the wants of others; and what she could no longer supply from her own means, she obtained from the liberality of the more prosperous. Many a keen disappointment did she now sustain. "Her expectations of liberality to the poor from others were too high, and her displeasure too great towards them that denied." In fact, her rule for others as for herself was too nobly severe to be in its fulness attained. "She too impatiently bore unkindnesses from friends. Her will was set upon good, but her

weakness could not bear the crossing or frustrating of it." Yet this impatience of spirit did not communicate itself to her outward demeanour, which was marked by extreme gentleness, and forbearance; so that she won the love and respect of all amongst whom her changeful lot was cast. In her own family she even carried the mildness of her government to an extreme. She would never blame her servants for any act of carelessness; and would silently submit to severe losses from them, sooner than, by charging them with an unproved fault, tempt them to the farther sin of falsehood. This meek and quiet spirit, so little to be expected from one of such an ardent temperament, was not acquired without an effort, nor attained but through severe discipline. She was always painfully conscious of a peculiar necessity on her own part for the practice of habitual self-control. Though the melancholy that had clouded her youth was dispelled, yet she was through life haunted with a dread of madness. To counteract this impression, she obliged herself to exercise extreme calmness and deliberation both of purpose and action. But, though she never lowered the standard of her own life, she became more lenient in her judgment of others. Persecution imparted no bitterness to her spirit, nor did the asperities of party strife narrow her charity. She learnt, too, to moderate her exaggerated expectations, and thus escaped many unreasonable disappointments. Austerity of manners and inharmonious tastes she had calculated upon as the trials of her mar-

ried state; but, whilst in these her anticipations were deceived, the holiness, which, indeed, pervaded the tone and temper of her husband's life, was yet, she found, many a time abated by human infirmity. This, perhaps, the keenest disappointment she ever experienced, conveyed to her one lesson, which by no other means she could have been persuaded to receive. It taught her patience with herself; and convinced her, that perfection is not the work of time, but the fruit of eternity.

The career of anxiety and difficulty, in which she was involved, imposed, however, too severe a tension upon her sensitive mind; which, "like the treble strings of a lute, strained up to the highest—sweet but in continual danger," required gentler handling than that which was permitted.

A fever, terminating in delirium, carried her off in June, 1681, in the forty-second year of her age. Her last words, indicating her humble trustfulness, rather than the triumph of assurance, were:—"My God, help me. Lord, have mercy upon me." Misjudged and misrepresented in life, after her death, her husband, to whose fallen fortunes she had attached herself in the bloom of youth and the promise of prosperity, himself vindicated her to the world. In his Breviate of her life, he has left, in the words of an eloquent writer, "a portrait, the original of which it would be criminal not to love."



II.

Frances Corbett—Married to Dr. Basire, a French Protestant, chaplain to Charles I.—His imprisonment and escape from England—His wife left with five children—His injunctions respecting them—Appointed professor at Weisseburg—Mrs. Basire's great fortitude—Her attempts to rejoin her husband in Transylvania—His return at the Restoration—Her remaining happy life.

ALL that can be gathered of the story of Mrs. Basire, her trials, and her virtues, is comprised in the scanty details of a few letters. The character to be traced there lacks something of the interest attached to that of Margaret Baxter. We are not admitted in them, as in Mrs. Walker's memoirs, to close acquaintance with the domestic life of the writer. Yet they furnish a striking picture of the patient, courageous constancy with which, in common with many fellow-sufferers in the days of the Great Rebellion, she endured the assaults of persecution and poverty, and the anguish of long-protracted separation.

Mrs. Basire was of a good family in Shropshire. Her friends, we are told, strongly opposed themselves to her engagement to Dr. Basire, a young

French Protestant, who had taken orders in the English Church, and was residing with Morton, Bishop of Durham, as his domestic chaplain. We are first introduced to her in a letter addressed by him to his "dear friend, Mrs. Frances Corbett, at Eggemont." A tone of earnest piety pervades this and many succeeding letters. They are headed with the sacred monogram, and are occupied chiefly in counsels of patient submission to adverse circumstances, and in exhortations to hope amidst darkening prospects. They were carefully preserved by her for whom they were first designed; and to them she may often in after-life have referred for the support of her cheerfulness and trust through long years of loneliness and distress. The very counsels, which in the following letter were urged upon her, we find repeated long afterwards, when still heavier trials pressed upon them:—

"DEAR LOVE,

Soon after my return, I sent a packet to Mr. Ramsden of Halifax, to be conveyed to you; I hope you have received it long since. For the present, I praise God, my soul prospers, I overflow with content, I feel no lack, but of an opportunity to approve my sincere intentions to you-ward, yet far be it from me or you to limit God and tie Him to a time: rather strive in your prayers with me, for an holy submission to His gracious Providence about the manner, means, time, place, in a word, all the circumstances of our preferment. He is a very good God, and knows what is best for all His children; only, be sure you are one of them by constant and patient obedience, and mark the end of it at last. Read but David's

37th Psalm, and you cannot, (if you but throw yourself into His arms,) but lie quietly in His lap. Fail not, I pray you, to write to me when you can : God be gracious unto you, and lead you by the hand through all the passages of your life, so prays,

“ Your assured friend and

“ Loving well-wisher,

“ J. B.

“ From Auckland Castle, this 25th September, 1635. I pray remember my service to your two worthy sisters, whom I wrote unto at my last return. I would I durst present my humble service to your noble father.”

Again he wrote :—

“ I STRICTLY keep the covenant I have made with you, daily to present your name to my Lord and Master, Christ Jesus, and that so much the more, as it is for His sake, you say, you love His servant : do so still, for if your affection be thus sincerely tempered and mixed, nay perfumed and refined, if I may so say, with such religious respects, and spiritual considerations ; no doubt but sooner or later, one way or other, God will reward it, with a comfortable success.”

Another time he sent Francis de Sales’ “ Introduction to a Devout Life.” “ It was made,” he tells her, “ by a French Bishop, yet is the book free from Popery (for I have read it aforehand for your soul’s sake), only when you see a cross at the margin, there it may be mistaken by some ; else all is safe.” This, and some other volumes that accompanied it, “ were,” he adds, “ bound by those devout virgins I once told you of : who knows but the prayers they might bestow on the binding may do you good

at the reading of them?" Possibly he may here refer to the ladies of Little Gidding, as much of their time was employed in binding and embellishing books of devotion; and the younger Ferrar was one of his friends.

Though his engagement was unsanctioned by the father of Frances Corbett, Dr. Basire appears to have been allowed to visit her at his house. Once, on his return from Shropshire, he describes the Bishop as bantering him on the cause of his journey. "On my arrival," he says, "my Lord in jest bade me welcome out of *France*." A playful allusion, perhaps, to the lady's name. "I perceived by his often asking again and again how your father did, he hath an inkling of my errand into your parts: I like it never the worse, for, if ever I have occasion to acquaint him with it in earnest, it will then be no such news to him."

The opportunity soon arrived. In 1636, Dr. Basire was presented to the living of Eaglescliff in the County of Durham; and, the opposition to their marriage being now withdrawn, in the following year he went to reside there with his wife—"your Priscilla and my Phœbe," as she was designated by Dr. Basire's learned correspondent, Nathaniel Ward. Some years of tranquil happiness were passed by them, and all seemed to promise prosperity, when, in 1641, Dr. Basire was appointed Chaplain Extraordinary to the King. During his visit to London on this occasion, as on others, he was the guest of his friend Dr. Busby. From him

Mrs. Basire, in her husband's absence, received a letter couched in terms of the loftiest lowliness, in answer to one of hers, written, doubtless, to propitiate him in favour of her poor little boy, who, at an early age, was placed under his awful authority. It would be curious to know how his fair correspondent's spelling appeared to the great schoolmaster. To modern eyes it seems ingeniously bad.

Far better had it been for Dr. Basire, had he been less favoured by his patrons, or less distinguished by his own talents. As dignities and preferments increased upon him, his position became every day more hazardous. Summoned to attend upon the King at Oxford, where he preached frequently before him and the Parliament, he was from that time a marked man. About two years afterwards, though it does not appear upon what pretence, he was arrested in his own house, and conveyed a prisoner to Stockton Castle; leaving his wife to contend against their enemies for a subsistence for herself and her four children. To these a fifth was added, soon after her husband had contrived to effect his escape from his place of captivity to his native country. From thence he wrote to his "‘dear yoke-follow,’ may God hear your wish, and in His good time restore us to each other! If not, God prepare and strengthen us, still even unto death, rather than forswear and betray the truth, and then live still miserable and infamous, too.”

Such brave words were needed by one in Mrs. Basire's position, in delicate health, parted from her

husband, and plunged suddenly from affluence into want. For the support of herself and a family of young children she had to wring a scanty pittance from the niggard hands of men, embittered by religious and political animosity, who even grudged to the family of a delinquent the fifths which the Act of Parliament assigned them. "The Lord judge between you and Bushell, for I know no other way," was Dr. Basire's summary mode of disposing of some of these difficulties. He had evidently much of the French buoyancy of character; and, when settled in a little summer-house in a garden near his native city Rouen, he describes it to his wife as the most pleasant place he ever lived in,—“had I,” he added, “but your own sweet self in it with me.”

The hopes, entertained by Dr. Basire, of gaining a livelihood for himself and his family were disappointed. The English in France were in such poverty, that he failed of obtaining pupils among them, as he had expected; and but three youths, the sons of cavalier families, were sent to him from England. With them he removed in the following year to Paris, where, on Christmas Day, 1647, he preached in Sir Richard Browne's Chapel. He was now far too deeply involved on the side of loyalty to render his return home possible. Both tongue and pen were employed in promoting the cause of the King and the Church. Of its justice, goodness, and truth he was firmly persuaded, and in a note,

written to Evelyn during his sojourn in Paris, he declared his willingness to die for it.

The ardour of his loyalty prepared a fresh trial for Mrs. Basire. Hitherto she had been cheered by constant letters, and could on all occasions apply to her husband for his advice in matters of difficulty. But she had now to reconcile her mind to a diminished correspondence, and a yet wider separation. The affairs of England Dr. Basire held to be too much troubled "for honest men to fish in it, and catch." He resolved, therefore, after wintering in Paris, to proceed southwards in the spring. It was better, he thought, "to go towards Italy, than towards Newgate." Accordingly, we find him writing from Paris, March 5th, 1648, on "Thursday at midnight, to his very loving friend Mrs. Frances Basire:"—

"MY DEAREST,

MY last letter unto you was so ample, as if you have received it, it would save me the labour of repetition, top-full of business as I am, now upon the point of my voyage into Italy, which we begin upon Friday next, God willing. Pray to God for my good speed, and for the welfare of my young gentlemen. We have jointly sent you some tokens from Paris, which will come by Ribston way, either by my cousin Swinburn, or by some other way; but Mr. Anderson is to keep them till he get a safe hand. The two dresses for the head to go bare, you may divide betwixt my young cousin Mary Blaxton, and our Mall. The black gloves are for your own sweet hands, whom I kindly kiss. The blue heart is for Mall; besides,

(if you please,) the silver hook and clasp is for Peter's hat. The four rings of gold are for you and my other three sons. I would have sent my good Lady Blaxton some token, but these are too poor to present her with: I shall deliver unto Mr. Anderson the three pieces of gold (of 20s. a piece) which my Lady Saville sent me. I have desired my Lady Lambton to pay you at one or two payments, yearly, £20, which I shall lay out here for her son, whilst he is abroad with me. Also I have desired my schoolfellow, one Mons. Jacob Roussel, living in Rouen, whom I leave as my attorney, to clear my little inheritance from all demands of portions or the like, that either in the fall of the year he will receive my son Peter, if he comes, or else, as soon as I am out of suit at law, that he will convey unto you the rent (some £8 a year at present,) by the hands of Sir George Ratecliffe. This is all I can do for you at present, save that I have moved divers friends in your behalf to assist you in case of the King's recovery; and chiefly this last week, when I took leave of the prince after sermon, he was pleased graciously to promise me, that he will do what he can for you and yours. God reward him for it. I send you herewith a list of such friends as you may address yourself unto, if need be. I have lately written two treatises, the one in Latin, the other in French, in behalf of the King and Church of England. And now, dear heart, labour by faith and patience to resign me cheerfully unto God, Who is everywhere alike near unto them that fear Him. The Queen hath given me a letter of recommendation unto a Cardinal at Rome for safety from the Inquisition, and we have a great many more letters of favour: when you write to me, direct your letters thus: A Mons. Mons. de Preaumont, for that is the name of my gentry which I am counselled to go under, rather than the name of Johnson. You must subscribe your name thus, *Your loving friend Frank, or F."*

After giving some particulars about his pupils, he adds :—

“ PRAISE God for me, and pray, pray for me that I may be truly and constantly thankful in heart, tongue, and life. The last letter I received from you was dated the 12th of January. Commend me to both Mr. Davisons : I writ lately to Mr Thomas. If his son come, and you hear nothing from me to the contrary, send Peter over with him, according to my former directions, to Mons. Roussel, but send him, if you can, competently furnished with clothes and linen. I hope you bear all your crosses Christianly, contentedly, for we have but a little time to stay here in this world. When death comes on, our crosses are at an end in a moment.”

The conclusion of the letter is only in part legible, worn out we could believe with constant perusal, as it was the last Mrs. Basire received from her husband for a long time. From her friend Lady Lambton she heard of his recovery from illness ; but a letter, written to her in the autumn after he quitted Paris, appears never to have reached her. From Rome, in the spring of 1649, a long letter, enclosing a journal, was despatched to her. In this her husband laid on her the following injunctions for her guidance in his absence :—“ Have a special care,” he wrote, “ to catechize my children yourself, after the good old way ; that they be not poisoned with rebellious and schismatical principles.

“ I pray, set some time apart to give God solemn thanks for our extraordinary deliverances by land and by water ; and offer up for us the seven Psalms

in the fear and knowledge of God, and to keep them from idleness; and, I praise God, I have comfort of them for their learning and piety." Another time she tells her husband, that their daughter Mary was a good religious child, and serviceable to her mother; and that Mr. Horne had taught her to write, and she had paid Mr. Brown for teaching her the virginals. Of her eldest son she says with some pride, in prospect of his joining his father at Rome:—"I think he will be a great comfort to you, and he loves rising early to go to school." Peter, the second boy, was at school in the neighbourhood of Rouen; and John, the youngest of their children, she describes as "learning fast to read a chapter in the Bible against Easter, and then he would fain see his father as I should be, if it please God to send us a good opportunity."

That hope was to be still longer deferred. Dr. Basire, having parted with his pupils one by one, spread his wings for a farther flight. For upwards of a year his wife remained without tidings of him. Meanwhile he had been "viewing the whole land of Canaan," and at last wrote to her from Aleppo. During this interval of suspense she wrote to him:—"So that you are well and content I shall wholly submit to God, till He see fit for me to enjoy what I want. I thank you very kindly for all your great and constant love to me, though so far off, and so long almost as seven years. I do assure you, mine is the same to you." At the close of her letter she speaks again of her little boy, whom he had

never seen :—" John very much desires to see his father, for he says he is gone so far, as he thinks he knows not the way back, or else he wants a horse. I pray God send us all a happy meeting."

But whilst she thus wrote, fresh troubles were drawing near. After hearing from Dr. Basire at Aleppo, she was again for another year in ignorance of his movements. Being thus unable to prove that he was alive, she was threatened with deprivation of the fifths, allowed her from his benefice. A law-suit was also begun against her, to recover a debt incurred in former days. To her great mortification she was unable to comply with a proposal of their friend Dr. Busby, who offered, if she would pay for the board of her eldest son at Westminster, that he " would give him his books and learning, and what place fell within the school or without he would do his best for him." On account of the expense she was obliged, however, to decline this offer. M. Roussel, to whom her husband had committed the care of his little patrimony, disliking the trouble which it entailed on him, resigned the charge. To him Mrs. Basire had sent her second son to be educated ; but this trust he appears to have fulfilled no more faithfully than the other, in consequence of the uncertainty of remittances from the much-tried mother. For two years she could obtain no news of her son ; and it was a sad tale she had at last to hear of the mismanagement and neglect to which the friendless boy had been subjected. During the six years in which he had been absent from home

he had been under the care of almost as many tutors, ill-fed, ill-treated, and ill-taught. In this time he had been almost wholly without any tidings of his friends. He was afraid to write to his father, as he could not do so in Latin; and, when at last he found an opportunity of writing to his mother, his letter was obliged to be translated out of French for her. But, though he had forgotten his mother-tongue, and did not with certainty even know his own age, some recollections of his home-comforts in former days abode by him:—"Remembering the good cheese you make," he wrote to his mother, "if there be any ships which do lade coals near your dwelling or at Newcastle, for to come directly to Rouen, I entreat you to send me one as big as the moon."

It must have added another pang to Mrs. Basire's trials, that she was utterly unable to comply with his earnest entreaty that he might be recalled to England in another year. But to all her troubles she could discover a bright side. If her own health was feeble, it rejoiced her to find how serviceable her daughter Mary was to her when she was not well; and, though things were bad for the present, "it was thought by wise men they would be better." When her poverty was deepest, and her uncertainty about her husband's movements extreme, she looked forward to the day when they should again enjoy their own with the comfort of a good conscience, and praised God, Who had enabled her to go through so many troubles with thankfulness and content. As

her trials multiplied, so did her prayers. "I often think of your directions," she wrote, "and I and our children meet so much oftener at the throne of grace for you, which I find now by my own experience the surest refuge. The devil and the flesh, I know, have been and will be busy, but, by God's grace in me, I have and shall overcome them. My Lady Blaxton would often tell me of a saying of yours, our cross may be changed, but not removed. So, Lord grant, whatever He may send us for a cross, we may undergo it with Christian patience."

A prospect had at this time opened to her of re-joining her husband. Dr. Basire, after wandering through Palestine and Mesopotamia, returned to Constantinople, and was appointed chaplain to the French Protestants at Pera. This appointment he was soon obliged to resign. The resolution with which he persisted in the use of the English Liturgy offended his congregation; whilst his endeavours to effect a union between the Churches of England and of the East rendered him so obnoxious to the Romanists, that he was threatened by them with assassination. Animated with the spirit of a confessor, he declared himself willing to suffer the loss of all, rather than swerve from his allegiance to the Church for which he had already endured so much. It is, indeed, evident throughout his correspondence, that it was rather as an English Churchman than as an English subject, that he considered himself persecuted. This sentiment, doubtless, contributed greatly to inspire both his wife and himself with

that spirit of unrepining fortitude with which they encountered every calamity. More prosperous days now dawned upon them. An offer of a Professorship of theology in the University of Weissemburg was made to Dr. Basire by George Ragotzki, Vaivode of Transylvania. This, with King Charles's sanction, he accepted, and wished his wife to join him there. But, though she expressed her intention of obeying him as her "minister and husband," many difficulties prevented her from fulfilling her purpose. She was delayed by the necessary arrangements for the education of her sons; and, whilst the faintest hope lingered that her husband might return to England, she felt reluctant to leave her own land for one so distant. But the most imperative of all hinderances was the want of means to reach her destination, or to satisfy the creditors, who, when her intention of quitting Eaglescliff was known, came clamouring around her. The pecuniary assistance which her husband was now enabled to afford her, removed some of her difficulties; but anxiety about her children's education still detained her. She wished much to place one, if not two, of her sons at Westminster before leaving England; but for this her means were insufficient:—"I pray God," she said, "that He will give me that wisdom that He requires from me as a wife and a mother, and then I hope I shall satisfy your expectation in both, which is the desire of my heart to you and them." In her next letter she thus described the perplexities which prevented her joining Dr. Basire in his new home:—

"SIR, I most kindly thank you for your discreet love to me in not commanding me suddenly and rashly out of England. My determinate will is to be obedient to you, and to keep me constant to my serious resolution, of which I thought I had satisfied you in my two former letters. These are the chief things I aim at in my stay from you—the hopes of God's providence in giving you your own, the placing of some of our sons at Westminster, and settling the fifth part on them, and the payment of debts, the trial of the country how it will agree with my weak and sickly body, the uncertainty of the country by reason of wars, the remoteness and far distance, the language unknown to me."

The fate of "poor Peter," as she calls him, warned her not to send another of her children forth with such uncertain provision, as she had sent him to France. But, above all, she still clung to the hope of her husband's return to Eaglescliff:—"My greatest want I have in my house," she said, "is you for a guest, which God in His due time send to me. Our son John asked me the reason why his father knew how to send a letter, and cannot come himself. I am in the same mind you are, that, if it please God we meet, we shall live more comfortably than ever." Yet she would not withdraw him from his sphere of usefulness:—"If this burden be not too heavy on you," she continues in the same letter, "you have a greater blessing than any of your brethren, for Dr. Clark, and Dr. Nealer live of some temporal means they have, but do not preach. Mr. Thurscross has preached and prayed according to your church, and his name is given in, and threescore more."

Such considerations had at least equal weight with Dr. Basire. He was now also in receipt of a sufficient income, and he had a house provided for him at Weisseburg. But it was not until he had been settled there for nearly two years, that Mrs. Basire was able to fix upon a probable period for setting out upon her long journey. Thus she wrote :—

“ For Dr. Basire, at his house, Alba Julia,
in Transylvania.

“ Jesu !

“ Eaglescliff, January 24th, 1666.

“ MY DEAREST,

I HAVE received your three letters since your safe arrival to the Prince of Transylvania's court, and the five-and-fifty pounds sterling. I and our children do daily pray for your Prince and his Princess Sophia, and the young Prince Francis. I WILL, through God's help, as soon as you send to my Uncle Pigot the hundred pounds, and that I can order my affairs here to make myself and our three children ready, which I intend to take with me. Mary must be one that I must bring with me ; she is so serviceable to me, that I can in no cases want her ; and I not knowing of any maid or companion, or man, as yet fit to come with me ; Peter and Charles I intend, God willing, to bring with me, and John to leave at Eaglescliff with our friends, and Isaac with Mr. Busby. I know I shall have all those old creditors about me when they know I am to go, but I must with best advice I can, get to quiet them, and to part with somewhat to them that stand in the most need. About June or July, I shall, God willing, obey you and your prince's desire in leaving my own native country, kindred, and friends, in coming to you. You must needs think it will be some

grief to me at the present, but I trust in God and you, which will be able to supply the want of all. Sir William Blaxton, his good lady, Mr. Garnet, and the Davisons are all well, but sad to part with us from hence. I shall not forget the sadness of my Lady Blaxton's countenance, when I told her you had sent for me. God Almighty reward her and Sir William for all their love to us. Mary is now with her. I shall beg counsel of God, and take advice of my best friends, concerning all my affairs here. Two of our sons must be left in England, or they can have no fifth part. And now, my dearest, I entreat your prayers for me, and our little ones. I intend, God willing, to be constant in my resolution to come to you, without I shall have just occasion to see you here, or some great danger in my passage as I know not of. Our children and friends are all well, and desire your blessing. I shall ever remain,

“ Yours faithfully in the Lord,

“ F. B.”

It was, however, in the home where Mrs. Basire and her children had so long prayed that her husband might be restored to them, and not at the Transylvanian court, that they were again destined to meet. The unsettled state of the country where he had taken up his abode, most probably rendered it injudicious for her to think of following him. We have no letters of hers at this time by which her history can be traced; but at the Restoration she was still in England. A fresh trial of patience was then imposed upon her. Ragotzki had fallen in battle, and Dr. Basire, in whom he had reposed much confidence, was entreated by his widow not to forsake her and her son. For another year, therefore,

his exile was prolonged. But at the close of it he hastened back to England—"the very land of Goshen," as he described it, in a sermon preached on his return, greatly to the edification of Evelyn, who was amongst his audience at the Abbey. In the following year, also, he mentions with satisfaction the conversation he had one evening at Court with Dr. Basire, "that great traveller, or rather French Apostle,"

Of his wife's future history little more is known, but that her constant trust was rewarded, and her courageous hopes fulfilled. The last of her letters that has been preserved, is one of welcome to her husband on his safe arrival in England. His wanderings were now at an end; and he and his family reaped the joyful harvest which had been sown in many tears. He had, in 1643, been appointed Archdeacon of Northumberland, and was collated afterwards to a stall in Durham. Both these appointments, however, as well as the rectory of Stanhope, to which he had been presented by the King, were merely nominal, as he had never been suffered to perform the duties or receive the revenues of either preferment. In these he was now reinstated; and the fifteen years of separation and adversity, borne so bravely by Mrs. Basire, were followed by as many more of prosperity and peace. Their time was divided between Stanhope, Eaglescliff, and Durham. At the latter place they passed four months of the year, "three to attend the church, and one for hospitality." Dr. Basire de-

voted himself energetically to the duties of his calling, and corresponded with many learned divines ; but of his wife little can be gleaned from his letters :—" Isaac, my blessing to you ; follow your good father's advice ; " is added, in her handwriting, as a postscript to one of her husband's letters to their eldest son. Occasional mention also is made of her delicate health in some of his other letters. But, now that her struggles were ended, that quiet existence could furnish little of general interest. Her children were happily settled in their own neighbourhood, with the exception of the unfortunate Peter, who joined the Romish communion, and was disinherited by his father. Her husband was treated with honour and distinction in the diocese ; and his friends spoke of him as likely to be made a bishop. But he, for his part, disclaimed such ambitious views. Mrs. Basire, too, was now able to accord a hospitable welcome to the kind and generous friends who had aided her in the day of adversity. On one occasion her husband received a reproof from Bishop Cosins for having entertained as his guests at Durham, persons " of different religions." He excused himself for this act of latitudinarianism by pleading the kindness they had shown to his wife and children in their time of need ; and, in the diversity of opinions which then prevailed, he would have found no little difficulty in excluding from intimacy all, whose views were not perfectly in accordance with his own. His friend and correspondent, Bishop Lucy, in a very interesting letter, written from Brecon, says :—" Although

I doubt every diocese (I am too sure, mine) hath all the sects in Amsterdam, and more by the Papists." But these polemical differences, we may be sure, cast no shadow over the home where Mrs. Basire's cheerful trustful spirit shed a glow of gladness around her. Following in the steps of the most patient man, like him, the latter end was more blessed to her than the beginning. When the combat had seemed most unequal, and its end least hopeful, she had still seen "God and the good cause" on her side; and for these she had gladly yielded all she had, save hope. And so through troubles, that would have crushed a feebler spirit in the dust, she came out victorious, blessing—

" ——— the cleansing fire
And the furnace of living pain."

Mrs. Basire and her husband died within a few months of each other, in 1676; she in July, and he in the November following.





HOME-LIFE OF ENGLISH LADIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

LEARNED LADIES AND THEIR WORKS.

I.

Female education in the seventeenth century—Its deterioration—Lady Anne Clifford—Her parents and instructors—Marriage to the Earl of Dorset—Second marriage to the Earl of Pembroke—Widowhood of twenty-seven years—Her restoration of her ancestral residences, charitableness, and hospitality.

THE close attention to household duties, which in former times was required of a lady, would, it may be thought, prove very incompatible with the cultivation of the mind. And, in a certain sense, it undoubtedly was so. Much time could not be spared to a course of multifarious and indiscriminate reading.

But, on the other hand, those who sought to while away a leisure hour in “indolent vacuity of thought,” did not then find in a book the readiest means of accomplishing their purpose. A few subjects (of which one was generally theology) were carefully and laboriously studied; and the works

that treated of them were diligently read, annotated, and analysed. Lady Gethin's commonplace book, which was published after her death in her twenty-first year, shows with what close attention the works of Bacon, Jeremy Taylor, Owen Feltham, and others, had been perused by her. It is to be observed, however, that her mother, Lady Norton, though herself well-read in the Classics, and acquainted with the writings of the Fathers, did not detect the amount of her daughter's obligations to more modern authors. For the notes were published as original compositions, with an apology for their deficiencies, which were accounted for by their having been written in haste and at spare times only.

Holding that "too much study is sloth," it was looked upon by these ladies rather as an indulgence, permitted to vacant moments, than as the prime occupation of the day. But many were the folios of manuscript found treasured in the japanned cabinet, or carved scrutoire, when those whose mental progress they unfolded, or whose life of stirring incidents they depicted, or whose spiritual conflicts they recorded, had closed the pages, and laid down the pen for ever. There were many writers, but few female authors in those days; for self-advancement, in its fullest sense, was sought by them in their intellectual labours, and not mere literary repute. Lady Halket, who out of a busy life employed five hours daily in devotion, left twenty volumes of folio and quarto size, each containing from four to five hundred pages of meditations,

prayers, and resolutions, none of which were in her lifetime printed. Lady Warwick's Journal filled many volumes, but was intended only for her own perusal. Lady Fanshawe's Memoirs were written for her son, as Mrs. Hutchinson's also were for her children.

In these writings we miss, it is true, the high mental cultivation of our modern authors ; but this is in a great measure atoned for by a peculiar loftiness of sentiment, or natural power of intellect, which we find in some, and by the simplicity of purpose, and pure and fervent piety, which distinguish others. To take in at one glance, or to comprehend in one general description, the state of female education in the seventeenth century, is impossible. It differed as widely at the opening and at the close of that period as the system of the present day differs from that which prevailed a hundred years ago. The high standard of education in the Elizabethan age, which was lowered in the succeeding reign, and yet farther depressed by the disturbances of the Civil Wars, was finally discarded, when frivolity and dissipation became the mode at the Restoration. And so, the earlier we mount in the century the more solid are the acquirements of the women, and the more varied their accomplishments. The accounts of the education of two contemporaries, Lady Fanshawe and Lady Halket, so closely correspond, that we may consider it to be such as was usually bestowed upon young ladies in the time of Charles the First. The former describes her own as

including "working all sorts of fine works with the needle; learning French, singing, lute, the virginals, and dancing." Of Lady Halket we are told, that she and her sister "had masters for writing, speaking French, playing on the lute and virginals, and dancing; and a gentlewoman was kept for teaching them all kinds of needlework."

When, however, promise of unusual talent appeared, the young students were admitted into a more ample field. Such was the case with Mrs. Hutchinson and Lady Norton, who have been before referred to. We have seen the education bestowed by the Evelyns on their daughters, after the Restoration. At the same time we find the wife of a country clergyman, engaging resident masters to instruct her daughters in languages and singing. And, even to the close of the century, there were not wanting examples of classical scholars, and of students of Hebrew and theology. One lady (Mrs. Bury) united to these and other acquirements a practical acquaintance with anatomy. Of course, it is not to be concluded from these examples, that profound learning was a common attainment of the ladies of those days. It is, indeed, certain that at this period their education gradually became more and more neglected, both in the higher rank of society, and in that immediately below it. So that Lady Masham, the daughter of Cudworth and the friend of Locke, (herself also the rival and opponent of the celebrated Mary Astell,) writing in the opening of the follow-

ing century, animadverted severely upon the conduct of persons of quality in this respect. "For they permitted," she said, "their daughters to pass that part of their youth in which the mind is most susceptible of good impressions, in a ridiculous circle of diversions."

A very different picture is afforded us of the training of Anne, Countess of Dorset and Pembroke. Forming, as she does, a connecting link between the age preceding the Commonwealth and that which followed it, she may serve as an example also of the force of character and intellectual power, fostered by the educational system of her youth. Though numbered by Horace Walpole amongst his "Noble Authors," only fragments of her writings are known. But the courage and resolution with which she sustained and overcame the vicissitudes of her sorely-tried life, won her higher praise than any literary distinction. She was early initiated in the school of care; even before being in her own experience acquainted with it. Her father, the Earl of Cumberland, was accounted one of the ornaments of Elizabeth's Court. He was distinguished for his daring adventures by sea, and no less so by his possession of those qualities that fitted him to grace a festival, or take part in a pageant. Brave, witty, and handsome, so high was he in the good graces of his royal mistress, that he was permitted to wear her glove in his cap as a favour. But, whatever noble and romantic qualities were fostered in the Court of Elizabeth, it must be allowed that

its influence was not favourable to domestic happiness. Though a brilliant courtier, the Earl of Cumberland shone with diminished lustre in his home relations.

His marriage with the Earl of Bedford's daughter, which in early youth had been a union of expediency, became, as years wore on, an insufferable bondage. Indifference became embittered into antipathy; and he, at last, separated from his wife, to whom, however, he permitted the guardianship of their daughter, who of their three children alone survived infancy. Though her unhappy position was to the Countess of Cumberland a source of constant sorrow, it but little affected her bright beautiful daughter—"a happy creature," as she deemed herself, "in mind, body, and fortune." She was proud of having inherited the "exquisite shape" of her father, and pleased that her eyes, though dark as his, should be lit with the brilliant animation of her mother's. With these she combined beauties peculiarly her own; her dimpled chin, and rich, brown locks, that enveloped her, like a silken veil, when she stood upright. Her mental powers were of no mean order; and her education was most carefully conducted, though the Countess of Cumberland, in consequence of her separation from her husband, was compelled to exercise the greatest frugality in all her expenses. That the Earl took some interest in the education of his daughter, appears from the fact that she was by him prohibited from acquiring any language but her mother-tongue. Yet her

tutor, Samuel Daniell, had drawn much of his inspiration from Italian sources. In a poem addressed to his pupil, however, he upheld the honour of his native speech over the southern tongue, foretelling the triumph of some English bard whom future days should see

“Planting our roses on the Apennines.”

Though he succeeded Spenser as laureate, he did not, as Southey has remarked, think it necessary to give Lady Anne any lessons in the art of poetry; as may be inferred from a specimen in her “*Journal*.” He was reputed “the most noted poet and historian of his day;” but his talents were not those of a mere scholar. He had also “a good faculty in setting out a mask, or a play.” So that the heiress’s imaginative qualities were not likely to be stunted for lack of culture. But that she might not fail in the accomplishments required of a good housewife, Daniell was assisted in her education by Mistress Taylor. That the result of their labours was to render their charge the most intelligent, and well-informed woman of her day, we have the united testimony of Bishop Rainbow and Dr. Donne. She was an indefatigable reader; and from the books, introduced into her portrait as a girl of thirteen, may be gathered some hints as to the direction of her early studies. Amongst them were the works of St. Augustine and Eusebius, Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*, Camden, and Cornelius Agrippa.

Grave as her studies were, they by no means subdued the liveliness of her spirits, or affected the *naïveté* of her manners. She has, in her Journal, left us a description of her life and feelings in the year following this time. In the Christmas of 1603, she says:—"I used to go much to Court, and sometimes did lie in my Aunt of Warwick's chamber on a pallet, to whom I was much bound for her continual care and love of me; in so much as, if Queen Elizabeth had lived, she intended to have preferred me to be of the privy chamber; for, at that time, there was as much hope and expectation of me, both for my person and my fortune, as of any other young lady whatsoever."

The prospect of her appointment at Court was speedily closed by the Queen's death. Of the hopes and fears which at this time agitated her elders, the young lady was an observant and interested spectator, during her walks in the garden of Whitehall; then "much frequented by lords and ladies." Greatly was she chagrined that her mother considered her too young, either to share her vigil at Whitehall when the body of the Queen lay in state there, or to attend as one of the mourners at the funeral; at which, however, she was present as a spectator. It was some consolation to be permitted to attend the King at Theobald's, and still greater to form part of the company, who went to meet the Queen on her entrance into the kingdom. Lady Anne was also present at the festivities at Grafton, where the King and Queen were entertained by the Earl of

Cumberland. "At this time," she says, "my mother was there, but not held as mistress of the house, by reason of the difference between my Lord and her, which was grown to a great height."

Little could she have believed, in that bright dawn of life, how nearly her mother's fate was in some respects a foreshadowing of her own. As little could the Lady Elizabeth, with whom she stood in "the shrine of the Great Hall at Windsor," during the feast on St. George's Day, divine how far different a career awaited her from that of the "man-minded" monarch whose name she bore, and to whose throne her father had but just succeeded.

Idolized as Lady Anne was by her mother, and warmly as the daughter returned her love, she was yet kept in sufficient control. She relates how, in going down to North Hall with her mother and some friends, she fell into great disgrace by outstripping her more sedate companions, and riding on with Mr. Murell. For this act of indiscretion she was sentenced to be locked up alone in her room for the night. But a cousin, to whom she was much attached, having contrived to steal the key of her chamber, came and shared the captivity of the culprit. The same kind-hearted cousin, in her anxiety to comfort her for her disappointment at not being allowed to be present at the coronation, on account of the presence of the plague in London, occasioned her an attack of illness by "feeding her," as she words it, "with breakfasts, and pear-pies, and such things." Her dress seems to have been, in

general, as simple as her ordinary fare. It was a grand event to be noted, that, when Lord Bedford and some other members of her mother's family were staying with them, she wore her hare-coloured velvet gown every day. It was at the same time that she describes herself as learning "to play and sing on the bass viol of Jack Jenkins, my aunt's boy." Gifts to musicians are often amongst the items entered in her account book.

When residing in their house at Clerkenwell, her father, she observed, came occasionally to visit them. These visits must have been paid wholly for his daughter's sake; "for," she adds, at a later period, "when he and my mother did meet by chance, their countenances did show the dislike they had, one of the other: yet he would speak to me in a slight fashion, and give me his blessing." This ill-assorted pair were parted by death in 1605. The Barony of Clifford and the landed estates were entailed upon the daughter of the Earl of Cumberland, but the Earldom fell to his brother. This involved both his widow and her child in a tedious and vexatious law-suit, which terminated only with the death of the uncle, in 1643. Whilst the Countess lived, the expenses of this suit were borne entirely by her, and she also discovered and established her daughter's claim to the Barony and lands of Vipont.

What the courage of maternal love had thus protected was, however, placed in extremest peril. For her daughter, who had when in her twenty-first year married Richard, Earl of Dorset, was per-

secuted by him to alienate her estates in order to supply his extravagance. Her firmness in resisting his unreasonable demands contributed greatly to estrange his feelings from her. But, if rumour spoke truly, she had, besides, a formidable rival in his affections, in Venetia, the fair and too famous wife of Sir Kenelm Digby. Her mother, however, ere her daughter's history had grown too nearly to resemble her own, had closed her troubled existence. The pillar on the road-side between Penrith and Appleby—

“ Which still records, beyond the pencil's power
The silent sorrows of a parting hour,”

was erected by the Countess to commemorate the spot, where, in 1616, she took leave for the last time of her “good and pious mother.” She had been the faithful champion of her rights whilst she lived; and to her prayers which, she was persuaded, were still offered for her daughter, Lady Dorset attributed the strength by which she was enabled to triumph over her difficulties, when left single-handed to encounter them. It is probable that the Earl of Dorset was not the only person to blame in their disputes. His Countess's high and determined spirit had been fostered by the homage of her family. She was not, therefore, very likely to be yielding where a question of her own rights arose, or placable where just cause of offence had been given her. But, without attempting to conceal the unhappiness which her husband occasioned her, she yet dwelt with complacency on the favourable points of his

character. "He was," she says, "in his nature of a just mind, of a sweet disposition, and very valiant. He excelled in every sort of learning all the young nobility with whom he studied at Oxford, and was a true patriot, and an eminent patron of scholars and soldiers."

Some redeeming qualities might be found in him. But what can be advanced in favour of her second husband, Philip, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, to whom she was united, a few years after the death of the Earl of Dorset, in 1624? The "Priest's blessing," bestowed by George Herbert on this ill-omened marriage, did not countervail the wretchedness, which the Countess might have foreseen for herself, when she consented to become the wife of one, whose fine person and fine dress were his best recommendations. He was so illiterate that he could hardly spell his own name. The violence of his temper at times transformed him into a raving madman. His public conduct rendered him contemptible even to the party whose cause he espoused, whilst he was branded with lasting infamy by those whom he had basely forsaken. He is always mentioned by Clarendon with the utmost contempt. But it is in the "Last Will and Testament of Philip, Earl of Pembroke," attributed to Samuel Butler, that the most terrible picture has been preserved of the degraded soul, devoid of every spark of true nobility or gentleness of nature, from whose hands the Countess for years endured a dreary penance. After having long submitted to it, she

was compelled to separate from him ; and their separation was made final by his death, in 1649.

But, whatever her trials, she was far too proud to complain. She withdrew from the uncongenial society in which both her marriages had unhappily involved her ; and sought in intellectual pursuits to divert her thoughts from cares that pressed too heavily. Of the clouds that darkened her outwardly prosperous condition she has left a description, all the more pathetic from the dignified reluctance with which she gives utterance to her complaints.

“ THOSE two Lords of mine,” she says, “ to whom I was by Divine Providence married, were in their several kinds as worthy noblemen as any there were in this kingdom ; yet it was my misfortune to have contradictions and crosses with them both. With my first Lord, about the desire he had to make me sell my rights in the land of my ancient inheritance for a sum of money, which I never did, nor ever would, consent unto, insomuch that this matter was the cause of a long contention betwixt us ; as also for his profusion in consuming his estate, and some other extravagances of his : and my second Lord, because my youngest daughter, the Lady Isabella Sackville, would not be brought to marry one of his younger sons, and that I would not relinquish my interest that I had in £5000, being part of her portion out of my lands in Craven. Nor did there want malicious ill-wishers, to blow and foment the coals of dissension between us ; so as in both their lifetimes, the marble pillars of Knowle in Kent, and Wilton in Wiltshire, were to me oftentimes but the gay arbours of anguish ; insomuch as a wise man, that knew the insides of my fortune, would often say, that I lived in both these my Lord’s great families, as the river Roan or Rhodanus runs through the Lake of

Geneva without mingling any part of its streams with that lake ; for I gave myself up wholly to retirement as much as I could in both those great families, and made good books and virtuous thoughts my companions, which can never discern afflictions, nor be daunted when it unjustly happens ; and by a happy genius I overcame all these troubles, the prayers of my blessed mother helping me therein."

The pleasures of study and retirement, in which she had sought refuge from the cares of her married life, she might through the seven-and-twenty years of her widowhood have pursued without hinderance. But her energetic character could not resign itself to so calm a course. She had been left in possession of a large jointure by both her husbands. In addition to this and her other property, she succeeded, in 1643, to the estates so long contested with her uncle. On the death of the Earl of Pembroke she retired to the North, and then set herself resolutely to the work of repairing the devastations wrought by the hand of war. Skipton Castle, her ancestral home, was in ruins. But a large octagon chamber, communicating with a gallery, was still entire ; and here she established herself, whilst the repairs under her superintendence proceeded. It took seven years to complete the castle, and in the courtyard the Countess planted an acorn from the oak at Boscobel, "as a symbol of the ancient loyalty of her house." She was warned, that what she was restoring Cromwell would destroy. "Let him destroy my castles, if he will," she replied ; "but he shall

surely find that as often as he destroys them, I will rebuild them, while he leaves me a shilling in my pocket." Whether from admiration of her courage, or from other motives, Cromwell never permitted the Countess to be seriously molested; though Skipton Castle was once filled with soldiers by his orders. She had been accused of privately sending assistance to the King at Cologne, but her enemies were unable to prove this charge against her. She did not, however, attempt to disguise her loyal sentiments; but boldly declared to Major Harrison, who commanded the garrison at Skipton, that she would live and die in her allegiance to the King.

Five other castles were reared up by her from the dust, and she repaired and adorned the churches of Skipton, Appleby, and Bongate. Three lesser chapels were also rebuilt by her, and she besides founded many schools.

And now, though scorning a barren repose, she accepted with thankfulness the simple enjoyments with which her life was crowned. Her early days had been sorely tried; but to her was accorded—

"Such calm old age as conscience pure
And self-commanding hearts ensure."

Writing in 1651 she thus expressed herself:—"In these three ancient houses of my inheritance, Appleby Castle, and Brougham Castle, in Westmorland, and Skipton Castle, or House in Craven, I do more and more fall in love with the contentment and innocent pleasures of a country life; which

humour of mine I do wish with all my heart (if it be the will of Almighty God) may be conferred on my posterity that are to succeed me in these places ; for a wise body ought to make their own homes the place of self-fruition, and the comfortablest part of their life. But this must be left to a succeeding Providence, for none can tell what shall come after them ; but to invite them to it, that saying in the 16th Psalm, v. 5, 6, 7, 8, may be fitly applied :— ‘ The lot is fallen to me in a pleasant place : I have a fair heritage.’ And I may truly say that verse—

‘ From many noble progenitors I hold
Transmitted lands, castles and honours, which they
sway’d of old.’ ”

The Countess’s sentiments are finer than her verses. It was deeply impressed upon her, that she held her earthly possessions but as a trust for the good of others. Thus she looked upon them, not as affording food for pride, or means of self-indulgence, but as talents to be improved by her with care, against her Master came to reclaim His own. The dwellings which she had rescued from ruin, were not on their completion resigned to solitude and neglect. For the Countess “ resolved by her presence to animate the houses which she had built, and the places where she lived ; and to dispense and disperse the influences of her hospitality and charity in all the places where her patrimony lay, that many might be made partakers of her comforts and kindness.” No inclemency of the

season or perils of the way deterred her from visiting, at stated intervals, her different castles. Always, before quitting home, she entered her chapel, there to commend herself to the Divine protection. And then, through mountain mist, and drifted snow, her horse-litter might be seen toiling along the rude roads, cut for its passage by the bands of labourers who acted as her pioneers. Once, when she was in extreme old age and weakness, her attendants attempted to dissuade her from undertaking one of these journeys, on account of the severity of the weather, and her own indisposition. But to all their representations she replied :—" She knew she must die, and it was the same thing to her to die in her litter as in her bed." And she persisted in carrying out her intention, rather than disappoint the large company who awaited her arrival at the place of her destination. Her roof afforded shelter to a numerous and motley throng. The young were trained there, and the old supported. Men of learning were afforded opportunities of study, and the enjoyment of congenial society. The chance passer-by was assured of a hearty welcome. Not the least favoured of the guests were those, who had rendered themselves suspicious to the government of Cromwell. Many such were harboured by the Countess in the hour of danger. The ejected clergy had in her a firm friend and a liberal benefactor. King, Morley, and Duppa, who were all three afterwards bishops, were her pensioners during the period of their exile.

Such wide-spread hospitality called for consider-

able management on her part. And such she was ready to bestow. During her wakeful hours at night she used to arrange all the business of the following day ; and nothing annoyed her more than to be obliged to alter any of the plans which she thus prepared. All her receipts and disbursements were noted down in an office, set apart for such business at each of her residences. Of her private charities she herself kept the account. The history of each day was also written under her inspection in a large folio volume, which always accompanied her in her progresses from castle to castle. She, besides, dictated a history of her own family, the annals of which she laboriously investigated. In this work she was aided by Sir Matthew Hale and others. She is said also to have left a MS. memoir of her first husband. Two ladies were employed by her as readers ; and, until her eyes failed, she also spent much time in reading to herself. " She had not many books in her chamber," we are told, " yet it was dressed up with the flowers of a library." This expression refers to her practice of making her waiting women write down any remarkable passage that occurred in the course of her reading. These they were directed to affix around her room on walls, and bed, and hangings, that wherever their eyes might be directed, whilst in attendance upon herself, they might derive instruction ; and that she might be furnished with useful subjects of conversation. Her copious memory and lively imagination, cultivated as they were, and combined with a fund of

pleasantry and a terse strong power of expression, rendered her not only an agreeable but an improving companion. Bishop Rainbow declared that there were no arts or sciences of which she was not capable of conversing, and whilst equal to associating with the most lofty, she could condescend to the most homely capacities. Dr. Donne's often-quoted compliment confirms this description.

The lady, who in her youth "knew well how to discourse of all things, from predestination to slea silk," seems, however, in her advancing years to have laid aside some of those pursuits which had charmed her early days. In the portrait, representing her in her widowhood, the Bible, and "Charron on Wisdom," make up her library, with the exception of two recipe books. These last may be taken as indications of her attention to her domestic duties, in which she was held forth as a model to her contemporaries. "As to her servants domestic, she well knew that they were *pars domûs*; and how necessary a part of the house servants are, and, therefore, to be kept tight, sustained, and carefully held up; if in decay, to be repaired; and, therefore, this part of her house she was always building or repairing by the hand of her bounty, as well as by good and religious order in her family. Indeed, she looked on some (and possibly, on some of the meaner sort of her trusty servants, whose offices might occasion their nearer attendance) to be such as Seneca allows them to be, good servants and humble friends."

Though she was indulgent to her dependants, she was extremely simple in her own habits. She drank no wine, eat sparingly, and after her second widowhood never wore any dress but one of black serge, so that she was often mistaken for one of her own attendants. It was her custom to receive at her table pensioners from an almshouse which she had founded near Appleby. Occasionally she was their guest; but every week some of them, and the whole number once a month, dined with her. "After dinner she would as freely converse with them, as with persons of the highest rank." To all classes, however, her hospitality was freely extended. The neighbourhood in which she lived might, we are told, be considered as her family. No person of quality visited the north country without being received as her guest. "It was held uncouth, and almost an incivility, if they did not visit this lady and her house, which stood conspicuous to all comers, and her Ladyship known to be easy of access to all addresses of that kind. And seldom did any come under her roof who did not carry away some mark and memorial of her house, some badge of friendship and kindness, she having always in store such things as she thought fit to present. She did not always consider what was great, or how it suited the condition of the person; but what (as her pleasant fancy suggested) might make her memorable to the person who was to receive it."

Such familiar intercourse with persons of all

classes of society, and all degrees of intellectual capacity, enriched her experience, as it enlarged her sympathy. We find, accordingly, that she had a singular power of adapting herself to all with whom she was brought in contact. "She could discourse with virtuosos, travellers, scholars, merchants, divines, statesmen, and with good housewives in any kind. Although she was skilful in housewifery and in such things in which women are conversant, yet her penetrating wit soared up to pry into the highest mysteries."

The energetic Countess, who, even in her declining days, is described as "upright, active, and commanding in her appearance," was yet affable and gentle in her ordinary demeanour. "Her words," says Bishop Rainbow, "were always seasoned with salt, savoury, but not bitter." Only when her religion or her loyalty were in question, she was firm and immutable in her sentiments. And, though in conversation she abstained from censure or condemnation of others, and especially of public affairs, yet in her Diary her comments were so severe, that her son-in-law, Lord Thanet, deemed it prudent after her death to destroy it. Once in conversing with a lady on the splendours of the Court at Whitehall, to which after the Restoration she was urging her to return, she replied with vivacity:—"If I should go to those places, now so full of gallantry and glory, I ought to do as they do to ill-sighted or unruly horses, have spectacles (blinkers) put before mine eyes, lest I should see or censure

what I cannot completely judge of; be offended myself, or give offence to others."

The genuineness of the letter of haughty defiance, attributed to her by Horace Walpole, is now generally discredited. But of the tenacity with which she maintained her own rights many anecdotes are given; and, amongst the rest, one, that shows also her unwillingness to retain resentment, even against a person who had been the cause of making her act very foolishly. A new tenant having refused to give, in addition to his rent, the "boon hen," which from time immemorial had always been claimed, the Countess instituted a suit against him, which was at last decided in her favour, but at the cost of £200. She celebrated her triumph by inviting the rebellious tenant to dinner, and drawing the hen to her, which was served up as the first dish, she said, "Come, Mr. Murgatroyd, let us now be good friends; since you allow the hen to be dressed at my table, we'll divide it between us."

Her character was one that seemed to mellow and improve with age. Her patience and submission amidst her many trials had been always exemplary, but to these the firmness and resolution of her natural character may have been thought to contribute. The meekness and lowliness, however, that, as her days drew to a close, possessed her spirit, were the work not of nature but of grace. In the spring of 1675, when in her eighty-sixth year, she departed "Christianly, willingly and quietly," according to the inscription on the splendid monu-

ment, which in her lifetime she had caused to be prepared for herself in Appleby Church.

She had before erected a monument to her father at Skipton; another to her tutor, Daniell, in Somersetshire; and it is said that the monument to the poet Spenser, in Westminster Abbey, was also raised by her.

Over the gates of the castles which she restored, she had inscribed the words:—"They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach; the restorer of paths to dwell in."

Within ten years of her death, three of these buildings were by order of her grandson destroyed; amongst them Brougham Castle, where, in her own words, "her noble father was born, and her blessed mother died." A melancholy comment upon the exulting prophecy of their restorer! But, though the dwellings which she had courageously reared from the dust, and animated by her large-hearted hospitality, were once more given over to loneliness and decay, she had prepared for herself a lasting memorial in the works of mercy in which she abounded. When Gilpin made his Tour of the Lakes, in 1772, her name was still held in veneration amongst the peasantry. The almshouses and schools which she endowed were not her only benefactions. In each of her castles, during her residence, she "every Monday morning caused ten shillings to be distributed among twenty poor house-

holders of that place, besides the daily alms which she gave at her gates to all that came." But in honour of her "good and pious mother" she commanded that, at the spot where she had erected the pillar in memory of their last parting, an annuity of four pounds should be distributed to "the poor of the Parish of Brougham, every 2nd day of April, for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by."

This pious bequest has been commemorated by Wordsworth in his sonnet on the

COUNTESS' PILLAR. 4

" While the Poor gather round, till the end of time
May this bright flower of charity display
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day ;
Flower than the loveliest of the vernal prime,
Lovelier—transplanted from heaven's purest clime !
' Charity never faileth : ' on that creed,
More than on written testament or deed,
The pious Lady built with hope sublime—
Alms on this stone to be dealt out ; *for ever !*
' LAUS DEO.' Many a stranger passing by
Has with that parting mixed a filial sigh,
Blest its humane Memorial's fond endeavour ;
And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-glazed,
Has ended, though no clerk, with ' God be praised ! ' "





II.

The early life and education of Margaret Lucas—Appointed maid of honour to Queen Henrietta Maria—Accompanied her to France—Married at Paris to Marquis of Newcastle—Their pecuniary difficulties—Lady Jane Cavendish and her sister.

IF the Countess of Pembroke engraved her name more durably than on marble, the Duchess of Newcastle, it must be owned, has written hers on water. Though she won for herself sufficient notoriety in her own day, she has not attained that distinction, which it was her ambition to achieve:—"I am," she says, "very ambitious; but neither for beauty, wit, titles, wealth, or power; but as they are steps to raise me to Fancy's tower, which is to live by remembrance in after ages."

Remembered she is, but by no means in so flattering a manner as she would have desired; since she would choose no meaner examples than those of Cæsar and Ovid, to excuse herself from the charge of vanity in giving her own memoirs to the world. Of all her voluminous works, the account of herself, included in a volume entitled, "Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancy's Pencil," and a "Life of the Duke,"

published in 1667, are those by which her literary powers are most favourably judged at present. Yet, at the time of their publication, they called forth severer animadversions than the trash to which she gave the title of philosophy, or the ridiculous dramas with which, however the audience were satisfied, she and her lord were entirely content. Charles Lamb, speaking of the "Life of the Duke of Newcastle," declares that "no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel." But Pepys, judging, not through the softening medium of the past, but with the scrutinizing gaze of a contemporary, thought it showed her to be "a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman;" and wrote the Duke down an "ass," for suffering her to speak of him and herself in such a strain. The truth is, there are very striking and eloquent passages in both works, though marred by an egregious vanity, which manifests itself, unblushing and unveiled, in every page of the narrative. For contemporary criticism the Duchess was prepared:—"I verily believe," she wrote, "some censoring readers will scornfully say, 'Why hath this lady writ her own life? Since none cares to know whose daughter she was, or whose wife she is, or how she was bred, or what fortune she had, or how she lived, or what humour or disposition she was of.' I answer that it is true, that 'tis no purpose to the readers, but it is to the authoress, because I write it for my own sake, not for theirs: neither did I intend this piece to delight, but to

divulge; not to please the fancy, but to tell the truth, lest after ages should mistake in not knowing I was daughter to one Master Lucas, of St. John's, near Colchester, in Essex, second wife to the Lord Marquis of Newcastle; for my lord having had two wives, I might easily have been mistaken, especially if I should die, and my lord marry again."

The mistake, against which she thought it needful to take such precautions, is one into which many have fallen; for her books are now so seldom read as to aid but little in preserving the memory of the writer. The date of her birth is not certainly known; but it is believed to be about 1623. Her father died in her infancy. Her description of her mother is one of the best passages in her works:—

"SHE lived a widow many years; for she never forgot my father so as to marry again: indeed he remained so lively in her memory, and her grief was so lasting, as she never mentioned his name, though she spoke often of him, but love and grief caused tears to flow and tender sighs to rise, mourning in sad complaints. She made her house her cloister, enclosing herself therein; for she seldom went abroad, except to church; but these unhappy wars forced her out, by reason she and her children were loyal to the King; for which they plundered her and my brothers of all their goods, plate, jewels, money, corn, cattle and the like; cut down their woods, pulled down their houses, and sequestered them from their lands and livings. But in such misfortunes, my mother was of an heroic spirit, in suffering patiently where there is no remedy; or to be industrious where she thought she could help. She was of a grave behaviour, and had such a majestic grandeur, as it were,

continually hung about her, that it would strike a kind of awe to the beholders, and command respect from the rudest, I mean the rudest of civilized people; I mean not such people as plundered her, and used her cruelly; for they would have pulled God out of heaven, had they had power, as they did Royalty out of his throne! Also, her beauty was beyond the ruin of Time; for she had a well-favoured loveliness in her face, a pleasing sweetness in her countenance, and a well-tempered complexion, as neither too red, nor too pale, even to her dying hour, although in years; and by her dying one might think death was enamoured of her, for he embraced her in a sleep, and so gently, as if he were afraid to hurt her. Also she was an affectionate mother, breeding her children with a most industrious care and tender love, and having eight children—three sons and five daughters.

* * * I dare not commend my sisters, to say they were handsome; although many would say they were handsome. But this I dare say, their beauty, if any they had, was not so lasting as my mother's, Time making suddener ruin in their faces than hers. Likewise, my mother was a good mistress to her servants, taking care of them in their sickness, not sparing any cost she was able to bestow for their recovery. Neither did she exact more from them in their health, than what they with ease, or rather with patience could do; she would freely pardon a fault and forget an injury; yet sometimes she would be angry—but never with her children; the sight of them would pacify her. Neither would she be angry with others but when she had cause, as with negligent or knavish servants, that would lavishly or unnecessarily waste, or subtly, or thievishly steal; and, though she would often complain that her family was too great for her weak management, and often pressed my brother to take it upon him; yet I observed she took a pleasure, and some little pride, in the governing thereof."

Under the guidance of such a head the family at

St. John's Abbey were brought up in principles of high chivalrous honour, united by strong affection, and inspired with a lofty refinement of sentiment. The romantic tendencies, thus fostered, wanted in the youngest daughter the balance of common sense; and their excess produced in her an extravagance of character, and eccentricity of demeanour, which contributed mainly to the celebrity which in after-life she attained. Lady Lucas, on the death of her husband, Sir Charles, divided his estate with her sons. But she preferred spending upon the education and innocent enjoyment of her daughters what she might have added to their portions; rightly judging that a happy youth would bring with it a blessing, which no wealth could secure. Her rule was one of extremest gentleness. She required her children to yield submission to her will, rather through the persuasion of their own reason, than the dictates of her authority. With anxious care she watched over the formation of their character and early habits.

"We were," says the Duchess, "bred with respectful attendance, every one being severally waited upon; and all my mother's servants in general used the same respect to her children, (even those that were very young) as they did to herself; for she suffered not her servants, either to be rude before us, or domineer over us; neither were we suffered to have any familiarity with them, or conversation, yet caused us to demean ourselves with an humble civility towards them, as they with dutiful respect towards us; not, because they were servants, were we so reserved; for many noble persons are forced to serve

through necessity ; but by reason the vulgar sort of servants are as ill-bred as meanly born, giving children ill examples and worse counsels."

Though supplying them with instructors in all the accomplishments, then considered necessary for young ladies, their mother set less value on their intellectual than on their moral culture.

"As to tutors," continues the daughter, "we had all sorts of virtues ; as singing, dancing, playing on music, reading, writing, working, and the like ; yet we were not kept strictly thereto. They were rather for formality, than benefit ; for my mother cared not so much for our dancing and fiddling, singing, and prating of several languages, as that we should be bred virtuously, modestly, civilly, and in honest principles."

But whatever educational advantages were provided for her, Margaret availed herself but little of them. She had an utter inaptitude for the acquirement of languages ; she disliked dancing ; nor did the more sedate employment of the needle please her better. But she read incessantly, because holding a book in her hand saved her from the accusation of idleness, and excused her from following other less congenial pursuits. To the wholesome discipline of actual study she never submitted herself, though often diving into books beyond her age or understanding. But even when hopelessly out of her depth in their pages, she never deigned to invoke the aid of her paid instructors ; but had recourse to the assistance of her eldest brother, Lord

Lucas, whose powers she held in much higher esteem. She early imbibed the tone and failing of her family. Whilst priding themselves on their gravity of deportment, and solidity of character, with rigid exclusiveness they shut out the rest of the world from the contemplation or imitation of their virtues. Even the marriages of the elder brothers and sisters did but little towards enlarging the circle. The new members thus introduced into it were cordially received, and admitted to see—

“ ———— what life the gods led there.”

But to the families with whom they thus became connected the domestic party at St. John's remained absolute strangers. Half the year they spent together in their mother's country house. Here the brothers' amusements were fencing, -wrestling, and shooting. In such mere pastimes as hawking and hunting they never allowed themselves to indulge. Music and dancing they despised as effeminate, and they never touched either cards or dice. Books and needlework, grave conversation and long walks, occupied the sisters' time. When they were in London, “ they were dispersed into several houses of their own ; yet for the most part they met every day, feasting each other, like Job's children.” Besides these patriarchal feasts, they attended the theatres in the winter ; and, as the year advanced, they visited Hyde Park and Spring Gardens. Sometimes they would sup in a barge upon the Thames, attended by music. “ These harmless re-

creations they would pass their time away with ; for they did seldom make visits, nor went abroad with strangers in their company, but only themselves in a flock together, agreeing so well that there seemed but one mind amongst them ; and not only the brothers and sisters agreed so, but the brothers and sisters-in-law ; and their children, although but young, had the like agreeable natures and affectionate dispositions."

But these qualities, which rendered them so amiable amongst themselves, required the atmosphere of home to expand in. When brought in contact with persons unacquainted with the family Shibboleth, they seem to have worn a very different aspect, if we may take Clarendon's description of the second brother, Sir Charles Lucas, as a type of the rest :—" He was very brave in his person ; and in a day of battle a gallant man to look upon and follow ; but, at all other times, and places, of a nature scarce to be lived with, of no good understanding, of a rough and proud humour, and very morose conversation."

Sir Charles may in his character have exaggerated the family foibles, but the spirit of exclusiveness in which they were reared had no good effect upon the mind of his youngest sister. Treasuring up the opinions, and mimicking the manners of her elders, she grew up amongst them a dreamy, listless girl, clinging with an ardent affection to her own relatives, and looking down with lofty contempt on all

the world besides. Already, before she was twelve years old, she had tried her wings as an authoress ; and, that her first flight might be bold enough, her earliest essays were made in philosophy and poetry. Alone, and in silence, she used to pace for hours the long, dim rooms of the old Abbey, yielding herself up without restraint to all the pleasures and the perils of reverie. Even when she descended from these heights, she could scarcely bear to leave the world of imagination behind. Her favourite diversion was, to invent for herself fantastic costumes, suitable, no doubt, to the parts she played on fancy's stage. Dire was her displeasure with any who presumed to usurp her properties. Nor less was the annoyance which the peculiar fashion of her attire occasioned her mother, who was always especially careful that her daughters should be well-dressed.

Such was the training of Margaret Lucas for a life unusually chequered with good and evil fortunes. On the breaking out of the Civil War the family at St. John's was dispersed ; and Margaret, at this time hearing that the Queen was less numerously attended than formerly, loyally besought her mother to obtain for her the post of maid of honour. To this project her brothers and sisters unanimously opposed themselves. The position was one, which they considered utterly unsuited to a person of her habits and disposition. She had hitherto scarcely quitted her own home. Her shyness was extreme, and such as she could never through life wholly

triumph over; though she veiled it under an assumption of haughtiness and *brusquerie*.

"I AM," she wrote, "naturally bashful; not that I am ashamed of my mind or body, my birth or breeding, my actions or my fortune, for my bashfulness is in my nature, not for any crime; and though I have strived and reasoned with myself, yet that which is inbred, I find is difficult to root out, but I do not find my bashfulness is concerned with the qualities of the persons, but the number; for were I to enter amongst a company of Lazaruses, I should be as much out of countenance as if they were all Cæsars or Alexanders, Cleopatras or Queen Didos; and the more foolish or unworthy I conceive the company to be, the worse I am, and the best remedy I ever found was, to persuade myself that all the persons I meet are wise and virtuous."

Conscious as she was of her natural incapacity for a Court life, and though she had hardly been trusted out of sight of her friends before, she yet persisted in her design. Having won her mother's consent, she disregarded all other counsels; and joined the Queen at Oxford. And now the trials, which her friends had foreseen for her, began. Of her embarrassment at the novelty of her situation at this time she has left a candid confession:—

"I WAS bashful," she says, "when out of my mother's, brothers', and sisters' sight, whose presence used to give me confidence, thinking I could not do amiss, whilst any one of them were by, for I knew they would gently reform me if I did; besides I was ambitious they should approve my actions and behaviour; that when I was gone from them I was like one that had no foundation to stand on,

or guide to direct me, which made me afraid lest I should wander with ignorance out of the ways of honour, so that I knew not how to behave. Besides, I had heard that the world is apt to lay aspersions even on the innocent, for which I durst neither look up with my eyes, nor speak, nor be any way sociable, insomuch as I was thought a natural fool; indeed, I had not much wit, yet I was not an idiot; indeed, my wit was according to my years; and though I might have learnt more wit, and advanced my understanding by living in a Court, yet being dull, fearful, and bashful, I neither heeded what was said or practised, but just what belonged to my loyal duty, and my own honest reputation; and, indeed, I was so afraid to dishonour my friends and family by my indiscreet actions, that I chose rather to be accounted a fool, than to be thought rude or wanton; in truth, my bashfulness and fears made me repent my going from home to see the world abroad, and much I did desire to return to my mother again, or to my sister Pye, with whom I often lived when she was in London, and loved with a supernatural affection. But my mother said, it would be a disgrace for me to return out of the court so soon after I was placed."

With a sinking heart, therefore, Margaret Lucas resigned herself to the fate which she had rashly encountered, and accompanied the Queen in her flight to France. She was happy whilst there in finding a friend in Lady Browne, who took pity on the shy, affrighted maid of honour, and seems to have been active also in promoting a marriage between her and the Marquis of Newcastle. In the spring of 1645, he arrived in Paris, self-exiled from England in the preceding year, when, maddened by the disasters of Marston Moor, he aban-

doned his country and his King at their sorest need. Yet his courage was unimpeached, and his honour unsullied. His were qualities that peculiarly fitted him to—

“ Shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace.”

In those accomplishments that adorn the mind, or refine the outward bearing, he was a proficient. He was a lover of music, and was himself a poet; whilst in horsemanship, fencing, and dancing he excelled. The princely pomp in which he dwelt, no less than his liberal hospitality, and gracious manners, endeared him to his country neighbours. But he had fallen upon days in which his qualities and acquirements were out of place. However much he delighted in the pomp and circumstance of war, however high his courage rose in the presence of danger, he was utterly incapable of comprehending or controlling those “ awful moments” on which such vast events depended. None led a more numerous following to the support of the King. But in his sovereign he recognized rather the guardian of his own greatness, than the ruler of his country. He fought less for loyalty or faith, than to avenge the insults offered to the established order of the realm, and to win back for himself the security he had before enjoyed. It was not so much Republican or Puritan that he opposed, as the disturbers of his country’s tranquillity, and the invaders of his own dignity.

Immediately upon his arrival in Paris, the Marquis hastened to tender his duty to the Queen. Margaret, being in attendance upon her Majesty, had thus, for the first time, the fortune of seeing him. She had been already recommended to his notice. Her brother, Lord Lucas, had served under the Marquis during the war, and had been asked by him to name what return he required for his services. He replied, that for himself he sought nothing; but that the fate of his youngest sister, now following the falling fortunes of the Queen, and deprived of home and provision, filled him with apprehension and distress. The Marquis was interested in his description of his young sister, and touched by her forlorn condition. On coming to France he sought her acquaintance. He was full thirty years her senior, had been married before, and had children older than herself. But he was at once powerfully attracted by her. Those peculiarities of manner and disposition, which repelled others, had charms for him. And she, dazzled by his reputation, and proud of his preference, speedily returned his affection :—

“MY Lord Marquis of Newcastle,” she tells us, “did approve of those bashful fears, which so many condemned; and would choose such a wife as he might bring to his own humour, and not such an one as was wedded to self-conceit, or one that had been tempered to the humours of another; for which he wooed me for his wife; and, though I did dread marriage, and shunned men’s companies as much as I could, yet I could not, nor had not the power to refuse him, by reason my affections

were fixed on him, and he was the only person I ever was in love with. Neither was I ashamed to own it, but glorified therein. For my love was honest and honourable, being placed upon merit, with affection joyed at the fame of his worth, pleased with delight in his wit, proud of the respect he used to me, and triumphing in the affections he profest for me, which affections he hath confirmed to me by a deed of time, sealed by constancy, and assigned by an unalterable decree of his promise, which makes me happy in despite of Fortune's frowns; for though misfortunes may and do dissolve base, wild, and ungrounded affections, yet she hath no power of those that are united either by merit, justice, gratitude, duty, fidelity, and the like."

" Fortune's frowns" were certainly bestowed for a while on the Marquis and his bride. They were married at the Ambassador's chapel in Paris, in 1645. Before the civil war broke out he was in receipt of an income of £22,000 a year. But of this he was now deprived. So that soon after his marriage, his steward told him that he had not credit enough to procure him another meal. This intelligence the Marquis received quite composedly, and only remarked to his wife, " in a pleasant manner," that she must pawn some of her clothes. To escape this alternative she prevailed upon her maid to dispose of some trinkets which she had formerly presented to her, and was glad thus to spare her own wardrobe for a while. Quitting Paris, they proceeded to Rotterdam. From thence they went to Antwerp, where they lodged in a house belonging to the " widow of a famous picture drawer, Van Ruben."

It was well that the Marquis and his young wife agreed so well in their tastes and pursuits, as they were for a time wholly dependent on each other for society ; their circumstances requiring them to live in extreme retirement. They were soon reduced to great poverty. Help from her own friends the Marchioness could not look for. They were as deeply involved as her husband on the losing side. During the siege of Colchester her home had been attacked by the Parliamentary army. After a gallant defence by a garrison of only a hundred men, the Abbey of St. John's fell into the hands of Fairfax. His troops, disappointed of the treasure they had hoped to find there, after ravaging the mansion, with sacrilegious hands rifled the tombs of the family, and with horrible triumph decorated themselves with the spoils of the dead. Soon afterwards Sir Charles Lucas came to his untimely end in the company of Sir George Lisle.

But, though from her own family aid was not to be expected, her husband's friends were still in a position to help them. Considerable assistance was afforded him by Sir Charles Cavendish, brother to the Marquis. Clarendon has described him as " a man of the largest and noblest mind, though the least and most inconvenient body that ever lived." The Duchess with fervent gratitude always acknowledged her obligations to her brother-in-law ; declaring him to be " a pattern for all mankind to take." Lady Jane Cavendish, the eldest daughter of the Marquis by his first wife, was also in-

defatigable in her endeavours on his behalf. She had been early trained in the school of adversity, and was a most excellent and exemplary woman. Whilst her father was abroad she and her sister had been besieged in one of his houses. It was held by them with much courage and loyalty for some time. But they were at last taken prisoners, and treated in a manner ill-beseeming their age and condition. But Lady Jane, far from bearing resentment against her enemies, became their advocate when she saw them exposed to the vengeance of some of the King's forces, by whom she had been rescued from their hands. By her exertions she now obtained the lives of her father and brothers, who had been proscribed. But all her endeavours to obtain from the parliament adequate means for their support were unavailing. She, therefore, sold the plate and jewels which had been presented to her, in happier times, by her father and grandmother, and transmitted the amount of it to Antwerp. This act of filial piety was gratefully recorded by the Duchess. She also relates, that Lady Jane, on engaging herself to Mr. Charles Cheyne, first stipulated with him for permission to send to her father a considerable share of her own fortune; with which condition he readily complied. Her sister, Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, married the Earl of Bridgewater, and is touchingly mentioned in her husband's epitaph, as one with whom "he did enjoy (almost twenty-two years) all the happiness that a man could receive in the sweet society of the best of

wives, till it pleased God, in the forty-fourth year of his age, to change his great felicity into as great misery, by depriving him of his truly loving and entirely beloved wife, who was all his earthly bliss." In her own epitaph she is described as being "of a noble and generous soul, yet of so meek and humble a disposition, that never any woman of quality was greater in the world's opinion, and less in her own. The rich at her table daily tasted her hospitality; the poor at the gate her charity; her devotion was most exemplary, if not inimitable; witness, (besides several other occasional meditations and prayers full of holy transports and raptures of a sanctified soul) her divine meditations upon every particular chapter in the Bible, written with her own hand, and never (till since her death) seen by any eye but her own, and her then dear but now sorrowing husband, to the admiration both of her eminent piety in composing, and of her modesty in concealing. Then she was a most affectionate and observing wife to her husband, a most tender and indulgent mother to her children, a most kind and bountiful mistress to her family. In a word, she was so superlatively good, that language is too narrow to express her deserved character; her death was as religious as her life was virtuous. On the 24th day of June, in the year of our Lord 1663, of her own age 37, she exchanged her earthly coronet for an heavenly crown."



III.

Lady Newcastle visits England, and publishes her first work—Resides with her husband at Antwerp—His elevation to a dukedom at the Restoration—Effect of prosperity on the Duchess—Her domestic life—Devoted to literary pursuits—Panegyrics addressed to her—Her inferiority to the learned ladies of her time.

THE efforts of Lady Jane Cavendish for the recovery of her father's property being without avail, his wife resolved on undertaking a journey to London, that she might there in person plead his cause. Accompanied by her brother, Lord Lucas, she made her way to Goldsmith's Hall, where she urged her claim to have some portion of the rents of her husband's estate paid into her hands. All the redress, however, that she obtained was to be told that, having married a delinquent, "she could have nothing, nor should have nothing, he being the greatest traitor to the state." This phrase she favourably interpreted, as signifying that the Marquis was the most loyal subject both to his King and country. But, displeased at the arrogance displayed towards her, she entreated her brother to

conduct her quickly out of "that ungentlemanly place." And so discouraged was she by this reception, that she never appeared as petitioner at any committee again. She remained in England, however, for about a year and a half. During this time she lived in great retirement, "giving," as she informs us, "only some half-a-score visits, and going with my lord's brother to hear music in one Mr. Lawes's house, three or four times; as also some three or four times to Hyde Park with my sisters to take the air; else I never stirred out of my lodgings, except to see my brothers and sisters; nor seldom did I dress myself, as taking no delight to adorn myself, since he, I only desired to please, was absent, although report did dress me in a hundred different fashions." Her thoughts were occupied with more abstruse studies; and her "Philosophic Fancies" were given to the world before she quitted England. Though "The World's Olio" was earlier in point of composition, this was her first published work. It was written in three weeks, in order to appear with her poems. The subjects of which it professes to treat seem to require less hasty handling. Three weeks is rather a limited period for the task of elucidating such themes, as "Eternal Matter," "Infinite Matter," and "Annihilation." It is not, therefore, surprising that the whole treatise should resolve itself into that condition, which the author, in one of her chapters, thus defines:—"I speak not here of Deistical Infinites, but of gross Infinites, such as Philosophers call Chaos."

For her works she chose patrons no less grand and impersonal than were her themes. "Philosophical Fancies" she dedicated to Fame; "The World's Olio," to Fortune. If she has hardly succeeded in securing to herself the voice of the one, the smiles of the other were after a time accorded her. But, there were still many years of patient poverty to be endured. She returned to Antwerp, not much richer than she had quitted it, and through the remaining years of their exile resided there with the Marquis. With him, she proudly declared, she would rather be as a poor beggar, than to be mistress of the world absented from him. The high esteem in which he was held by his own countrymen and foreigners, during these years of penury and obscurity, soothed many a pang which their altered circumstances inflicted.

With the Restoration peace and affluence once more shone upon them. The Marquis was restored to his estates, and advanced to a Dukedom. But his satisfaction in his renewed prosperity was not unalloyed. His princely domains presented a melancholy spectacle of ruin and devastation. Bolsover, where he had in regal fashion entertained Charles and Henrietta Maria, had been actually pulled down, that money might be made out of the sale of the materials. Though the Duke, when compounding for his estates, had made great sacrifices in order to save this noble pile, the greater part of it had been destroyed before it could be repurchased.

Of the ruin of her husband's estates the Duchess has given the following account :—

“ Of eight Parks, which my Lord had before the wars, there was but one left that was not quite destroyed, viz. Welbeck Park of about four miles compass ; for my Lord's brother, Sir Charles Cavendish, who bought out the life of my Lord in that Lordship, saved most part of it from being cut down ; and in the Blore Park there were some few deer left. The rest of the parks were totally defaced and destroyed, both wood, pales and deer ; amongst which was Clipstone Park of seven miles compass, wherein my Lord had taken much delight formerly, it being rich in wood, and containing the greatest and tallest timber trees of all the woods he had ; insomuch that only the pale-row was valued at £2000. It was watered by a pleasant river that ran through it, full of fish and otters ; was well stocked with deer, full of hares, and had great store of partridges, poots, pheasants, besides all sorts of water-fowls ; so that the park afforded all manner of sports for hunting, hawking, coursing, and fishing, for which my Lord esteemed it very much. And although his patience and wisdom is such that I never perceived him sad or discontented for his own losses and misfortunes ; yet, when he beheld the ruins of that park, I observed him troubled, though he did little express it, only saying he had been in hopes that it would not have been so much defaced as he found it, there being not one timber tree in it left for shelter. However he patiently bore what could not be helped, and gave present order for the cutting down some wood that was left him in a place near adjoining to repale it ; and got from several friends deer to stock it.”

The Duchess, like her husband, bore adversity nobly. In happier circumstances eccentricities of behaviour developed themselves in her, of which

Pepys has left us ample details. Her reception of the Evelyns, with the impression made upon them by it, has been already described. It was during a visit to London in 1667, when this interview occurred, that she aroused a sort of *furor*, especially captivating to a woman of her high-flown sentiments and intense vanity. The Gunnings in their first bloom did not create a greater sensation. People thronged around the Palace to catch a glimpse of her coming to Court, "as if it were the Queen of Sheba herself." When she went to the park, her coach was surrounded both by people on foot, and in carriages, all intent on obtaining a sight of this wonder of the day. The King paid her a visit at Clerkenwell, whilst the ragged urchins in the street ran after her in crowds when she appeared abroad.

It was not to her personal charms, but to her intellectual powers that she owed this ovation. Yet, perhaps, both were pretty much on an equality. Without being able to claim the title of a beauty, she was pronounced by Pepys, even when youth was past, to be "a comely woman;" and Mrs. Evelyn, with whom she did not find much favour, acknowledged her to be finely formed. Her portrait corroborates both assertions. She is there represented of a tall fine figure, of somewhat massive proportions; whilst the general heaviness of her features, the full lips, and sleepy eyes, are redeemed by the serenity of the smooth open brow.

In like manner much absurdity in her writing, and eccentricity in her behaviour, were balanced by

occasional strains of eloquence, and traits of deep and genuine feeling. Her hearty admiration for the character of the Duke, in which, notwithstanding grave errors of judgment, there was so much to call forth such a sentiment, excuses her want of taste in proclaiming her appreciation of it to the world during their mutual lifetime. Her frank avowal of her own vanity, and the absurd *minutiæ* respecting herself and her husband, into which she thought it necessary to enter, must have been intolerable in the eyes of her contemporaries. Yet they are more leniently judged by readers of a later age. To them the flies, embalmed in the amber of her Grace's periods, are all acceptable, as traces of manners that have vanished, and of the daily interests of a life that has long since passed into silence.

Besides her philosophical writings, her biographies, tales, and "Social Letters," the Duchess wrote a great number of plays. "The Humourous Lovers," attributed to her by Pepys, at the performance of which she and the Duke were present, was written by her husband, and is said by Horace Walpole to have been one of the best plays of the time. But as the Duke was in the habit of inserting scenes and dialogues in the dramas composed by the Duchess, it is possible that she may have lent him some aid in the composition of this. She was, at all events, as pleased with it as he was, "and at the end made her respects to the players from her box, and did give them thanks."

Not content with attiring herself in fancy costumes, her attendants were also tricked out by her in unusual splendour. Her coachman and footman were arrayed in velvet coats, whilst the coach seems to have been of the most lugubrious fashion. It is described by Pepys, as "a large black coach, adorned in silver instead of gold, and so white curtains, and everything black and white." The 'antick' dress, in which she was herself attired, consisted of "a velvet cap, her hair about her ears, many black patches because of pimples about her mouth, naked neck without anything about it, and a black *just-au-corps*."

It was in a similar costume that on the 30th of May she was introduced to the Royal Society. Evelyn attended her to the meeting room, where she was received with great pomp by the president. "After they had shown her many experiments, and she cried, still she was full of admiration, she departed, being led out and in by several lords that were there, among others, Lord George Berkeley and Earl of Carlisle, and a very pretty young man, the Duke of Somerset."

She received, indeed, adulation enough to turn the head of a wiser woman. Evelyn, in one of his letters addressed to her, after ransacking his memory for the names of all the literary ladies that ever lived, from Zenobia to Mrs. Philips, "our late Orinda," comes to this conclusion:—"All these, I say, summed together, possess but that divided, which your Grace retains in one; so as Lucretia Marinella, who writ

a book in 1601, 'Dell' Eccellenza delle Donne, con difetti e mancamenti degli Huomini,' had no need to have assembled so many instances and arguments to adorn the work, had she lived to be witness of Margaret Duchess of Newcastle, to read her writings, and to hear her discourse of the sciences she comprehended." Let us hope that Evelyn, in giving utterance to such an elaboration of insincere compliment, was moved a little by gratitude for her Grace's obliging expressions towards his wife, whom she dignified by the name of her daughter, declaring that "for her mother's sake, she looked upon her as her own."

Such favour was not usually shown by the Duchess to her own sex, for whose powers she entertained the very poorest respect. She declared that it was impossible for her to converse with women on equal terms, so low was she obliged to descend to adapt herself to their inferior capacities. She glorified herself, also, on her superiority in her choice of subjects over the common herd of authoresses, whom she represented as selecting for their themes "devotions or romances, or recipes of medicines, for cooking or confectioners, or complimentary letters, or a copy or two of verses."

That the flattery so lavishly bestowed upon the Duchess was not always genuine may be assumed. Waller's well-known sarcasm reveals as much. He might have been numbered amongst her warmest admirers on the strength of his own declaration, that he would give all his own compositions to have

written her verses on the "Death of a Stag;" but that, on being called to account for the extravagance of his praise, he vindicated his taste at the expense of his sincerity, asserting that "nothing was too much to be given, that a lady might be saved from the disgrace of such a vile performance."

A yet cleverer retort was that of Wilkins, Bishop of Chester. The Duchess was conversing with him on his favourite project of travelling to the moon. "Where," she inquired, "am I to find a place to bait, if I try a journey to that planet?" "Madam," he replied, "of all the people in the world, I least expected that question from you, who have built so many castles in the air, that you may lie every night in one of them."

It appears, notwithstanding her airy speculations, that the Duchess could bend her mind to some of the practical details of life; for she asserts that she "understood the keeping of sheep, and ordering of a grange indifferently well." But for more ordinary feminine pursuits she had no taste, and in the amusements of society she had no pleasure. Cards she detested. Dancing she considered beneath the dignity of a married woman. She had no skill in the use of her needle; and her neglect of her household duties caused many a hard censure to be passed upon her. In one of her "Sociable Letters" she attempts to vindicate herself from these charges. As illustrating the usual avocations of a lady of that period, and showing how she was expected to superintend, and even share in, the employments of the

upper servants of her establishment, it is not without interest. The whole narrative is probably only a fiction, and intended merely as an expression of her contempt for the employments of women in general :—

“ My thoughts,” she says, “ although not my actions, have been so busily employed about housewifery these three or four days, as I could think of nothing else ; for I, hearing my neighbours should say, my waiting maids were spoilt with idleness, having nothing to do, but to dress, curl, and adorn themselves ; and they excusing themselves, laying the blame upon me, that I did not set them to any employment, but, whereas they were ready to obey my commands, I was so slow in commanding them, as I seldom took any notice of them, or spoke to them, and that the truth was, they oftener heard of their lady than heard or saw her themselves, I living so studious a life as they did not see me above once a week, nay, many a time not once in a fortnight ; whereupon, upon the relation of these complaints, I sent for the governess of my house, and bid her give orders to have flax and wheels bought, for I with my maids would sit and spin.

“ The governess, hearing me say so, smiled to think what uneven threads I would spin, ‘ for,’ said she, ‘ though nature hath made you a spinster in poetry, yet education hath not made you a spinster in housewifery, and you will spoil more flax than get cloth by your spinning.’

“ Then I bid her leave me to consider of some other work ; and, when I was by myself alone, I called into my mind several sorts of wrought works, most of which though I had will yet I had no skill to work ; for which I did inwardly complain of my education, that my mother did not force me to work with a needle ; at last I pitched upon making silk flowers, for I did remember when I was a girl, I saw my sisters make silk flowers, and I had made some, although ill-favouredly, whereupon I sent

for the governess of my house again, and told her, that I would have her buy several coloured silks, for I was resolved to employ my time in making silk flowers. She told me she would obey my commands, but said she, 'Madam, neither you nor any that serves you can do them so well, as those who make it their trade; neither can you make them so cheap as they will sell them out of their shops, wherefore you had better buy those toys, if you desire them.'

"Then I told her I would preserve; for it was summer-time, and the fruit fresh and ripe upon the trees. She asked me for whom I would preserve, for I seldom did eat sweetmeats myself, nor made banquets for strangers, unless I meant to feed my household servants with them. 'Besides,' said she, 'you may keep half a score of servants with the money that is laid out in sugar and coals, which go to the preserving only of a few sweetmeats.'

"At last I considered that I and my maids had better be idle than to employ time unprofitably, and to spend money idly; and after I had mused some time, I told her how I heard my neighbours condemned me for letting my servants be idle without employment. She said, my neighbours would find fault where no fault was, and my maids would complain more if they were kept to work, than when they had liberty to play; besides, said she, 'none can want employment as long as there are books to be read; and they will never enrich your fortunes by their working, nor their own, unless they make a trade of working; and then, perchance, they might get a poor living, but not grow rich by what they can do; whereas by reading they will enrich their understanding, increase their knowledge, and quicken their wits; all which will make their life happy in being content with any fortune. Therefore they cannot employ their time better than to read, nor your Ladyship than to write.'"

Whether the waiting-women followed the counsels

offered to them does not appear; but the Duchess, we may be sure, was only too glad to obey advice so exactly adjusted to meet her inclinations. It must be admitted as greatly to her credit, that, notwithstanding the sensation which her appearance in the great world created, and her keen appreciation of the same, she was contented to subside into the seclusion of a country life, which the Duke's advancing years rendered most agreeable to his taste. They lived in the most simple manner, and in complete retirement. For the edification of future times the Duchess has recorded the homely fare that sufficed for her husband and herself:—"He makes," she says, "but one meal a day, at which he drinks two good glasses of small-beer, one about the beginning, the other at the end thereof, and a little glass of sack in the middle of his dinner; which glass of sack he also uses in the morning for his breakfast with a morsel of bread. His supper consists of an egg, and a draught of small-beer." Of herself, she tells us:—"My diet is for the most part sparing, as a little boiled chicken or the like, my drink most commonly water."

Released by her husband's tastes from the restraints of society, and renouncing of herself all domestic employments, she was enabled to the uttermost to indulge her inclination for meditation and literary employments. And thus beguiling her solitude "with harmless fancies," in "their pleasant company and innocent conversation" time flew fast with her. As fast flew her pen. Such was the

speed with which her lucubrations were committed to paper, that her writing was often taken for some strange character. She was consequently obliged to have her MSS. transcribed for the press by an amanuensis. These copies were rarely revised by the author, who feared lest the perusal of them should entangle the fresh web of thought in which she had anew involved herself. It is to be supposed, therefore, that many inaccuracies have crept into her printed works. But such carelessness is the more surprising, when we find her giving minute directions how her books are to be read, and nervously anxious lest they should fall into the hands of bad readers. During her residence at Welbeck she applied herself to the study of philosophy, not for her advancement in the knowledge thereof, as she frankly acknowledges, but “on purpose to learn those names and words of art that are used in schools.” This parrot-like acquirement of learned phrases apparently deluded her readers into a belief, that her works were really what they professed to be—philosophical treatises; and the Duchess was, like Belinda’s attendant—

“Praised for labours not her own.”

Besides these works, she was a most voluminous dramatic writer; and in these compositions the Duke lent his aid. Like herself, he found his chief recreation in his pen; and she gratefully acknowledged him to be her “only tutor.” For his conversation she was ever ready to lay aside her most

alluring pursuits; yet even with him, "I rather," she says, "attentively listen to what he says, than impatiently speak."

Thus the evening of their life passed tranquilly away. They had borne adversity courageously, and now they enjoyed prosperity with moderation. "Patience had armed them, and misery had tried them, and found them fortune-proof."

During a visit to London, in 1673, the Duchess was seized with an illness that proved fatal. The Duke did not long survive her. He died, in 1676, at the age of eighty-four. On the stately monument, erected to her memory in Westminster Abbey, the following inscription records her fame as a writer, and her better praise as a wife:—

"**HERE** lies the loyal Duke of Newcastle, and his Duchess, his second wife, by whom he had no issue: Her name was Margaret Lucas, youngest sister to the Lord Lucas of Colchester, a noble family; for all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters virtuous. This Duchess was a wise, witty, and learned Lady, which her many books do testify: She was a most virtuous, and careful, and loving wife, and was with her Lord all the time of his banishment and miseries; and when she came home, never parted with him in his solitary retirements."

Shortly after the death of the Duke a most curious work appeared. This was a collection of the panegyrics addressed to the Duke and Duchess, but more especially to the latter, by the most distinguished men of letters, and by different learned

bodies, both at home and abroad. The most extravagant laudations abound in these pages; extravagant even in a time when no delicacy of sentiment led men to stint in fine speeches. She is hailed as "Margaret the First, Princess of Philosophers, who hath dispelled errors, appeased the difference of opinions, and restored peace to learning's commonwealth." The rector of the University of Leyden styles her "the chief of women." The Vice-Chancellor and senate of Cambridge had the effrontery to declare,—“Whenever we find ourselves non-plussed in our studies, we repair to you as our oracle: if we be to speak, you dictate to us; if we knock at Apollo's door, you alone open to us; if we compose an history, you are the remembrancer; if we be confounded and puzzled among the philosophers, you disentangle us, and assoil our difficulties.”

Yet, though thus outrageously flattered, the Duchess was, in truth, very inferior to the learned ladies of her time.

Lady Ranelagh, in common with many more, was a profound Hebrew scholar. Lady Langham was able to make use of learned authors in their own tongues; and was “capable of conversing on points of divinity and humanity in more languages than one.” Mrs. Bathshua Makins, governess to the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I, held a Latin correspondence with the celebrated Anna Maria à Schurman, who not only wrote, but spoke fluently Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. She also conversed readily in French, English, and Italian;

and had a considerable acquaintance with the Oriental languages. She was, moreover, an accomplished artist. The German maiden had her rival in the South—Helena Cornaro, who, for her varied and profound learning, was crowned with laurel at Padua, where she was admitted as doctor in philosophy and arts. And, again, amongst our own countrywomen, though belonging to rather a later period, Anne Baynard, in her ardent thirst for knowledge, held it even “a sin, to be content with a little.” She wrote many Latin compositions; was trained in mathematics and natural philosophy; and was, besides, a Greek student.

What was it, then, that gained for the Duchess so high a position amongst men of learning and in the world of letters? It was, perhaps, chiefly her ambition, which she candidly owned to be the ruling principle of her life. Her contemporaries withdrew from notice; and held the cultivation of their intellectual gifts as of secondary importance to the fulfilment of their home-duties. From these trammels the Duchess boldly released herself, and courted the notoriety they shunned. She was the exception amongst women of literary tastes, and, therefore, made herself as distinguished as she desired, and as they deserved, to be.

Anna Maria à Schurman shrunk from the notice drawn upon her by her gifts. Helena Cornaro, with tears and supplications, sought to decline the public honour thrust upon her, and at last only yielded out

of filial obedience to the endurance of this outrage on modesty, this "martyrdom of humility."

Of Lady Langham we are told, that, though her learning rendered her a most delightful companion to her husband, yet he was a stranger to all those inconveniences, which some have imagined necessarily accompany a learned wife. Far from being elated by her varied accomplishments, she always behaved to him as her lord and head, and made use of her own knowledge and learning only to capacitate her to make the best improvement of his, from whom she was ever ready to receive instruction.

It was to read St. Chrysostom with her father that Anne Baynard perfected herself in Greek; and her Latin satires were written to defend the religion which she loved from the assaults of atheism. In society she was silent and pensive, and was rarely seen to smile. One day, as she sat in the church-porch at Barnes, the conviction flashed upon her, that she was destined to an early death. Beloved and cherished as she was, with life full of fair prospects before her, far from being saddened by the thought, it filled her with ineffable joy. From that time the spot where the aspect of death had become lovely to her, was her favourite resort. Near it she wished that her grave should be made. Two years later, in 1697, this request was fulfilled, when, at the age of five-and-twenty, she was laid in the spot which she had already pointed out to her friends.

But one of the most remarkable instances of modest concealment of literary ability is to be found

in Lady Pakington, if, as her epitaph asserts, the authorship of the "Whole Duty of Man" was justly attributed to her.

And, as a further illustration of the reluctance with which women at that time assumed a literary character, may be adduced the poetess, whom another accomplished lady has celebrated as—

"Orinda, Albion's and her sex's grace."

For, though not very accurately described as a learned lady, she was, at least in her own day, a celebrated authoress; and as such may be permitted to find admission into this group.





IV.

Orinda's birth and education—Marriage to Mr. Philips—Friendship with Jeremy Taylor—Her poetry, and letters to Poliarchus—Her married life—Character as a writer, and in society—Domestic trials—Visit to Ireland, and popularity as an author—Death in London, and posthumous reputation.

THIS lady and Mrs. Philips!" exclaimed Mrs. Evelyn, contemptuously contrasting the poor Duchess with another literary celebrity. And now, if the one has failed to retain that place amongst philosophers, which she deemed herself fit to contest with Aristotle, who, alas! remembers Orinda as a poet? Yet the Duchess herself, with all her advantages of rank and fortune, might have owned in her a rival not to be despised. Waller scoffed at the one, whilst Cowley lavished praises on the other. The admiration which she excited would seem, indeed, almost inexplicable, were it not well known how greatly a charm of character or manner may contribute towards making a temporary fame. Katherine Philips had no claim to the reputation for learning, borne so meekly by many of her contemporaries. She neither dabbled in metaphysics,

like her Grace of Newcastle, nor did she possess the accomplished pencil of Anne Killigrew, or of Sir Peter Lely's fair pupil, Mary Beale. Yet from her childhood her talents and abilities were considered quite unusual. She was counted even an infant prodigy, when, before she was four years old, she had, under the tuition of her cousin Mrs. Blacket, read through the whole both of the Old and New Testaments.

Four years later she was transferred to Mrs. Salmon's school at Hackney, then a favourite *locale* for such establishments. But even here her accomplishments seem to have consisted mainly in committing to memory a prodigious number of chapters of Scripture, and in repeating accurately the sermons which she was taken to hear. Before she was ten years old she could write them down verbatim. Piety and poetry divided her heart. Whilst a very little child she would remain for an hour or more absorbed in prayer; and, as soon as she could write, she wrote verses. There was in her that union of devotional and imaginative tendencies, which so often assumes the form, whilst it disappoints the expectation, of great intellectual power and force of character. The pensive piety of an imaginative nature may wither as soon as the sun is up, incapable of supporting the burden and heat of the day. Brilliancy of conception and vivacity of expression are often stimulated by an ardent sensibility, whilst their possessor may be quite unable to grapple with the hard distinctions of

science, or to handle the painful details of any subject, requiring serious mental effort. Such characters work no deliverance on the earth. At most they rear up a pillar, which, like Absalom's, may serve to transmit their name, and their name only, to posterity.

Though the father of Orinda was a London merchant, John Fowler of Bucklersbury, some biographers, assigning a "meet nurse for the poetic child," have asserted Brecknockshire to have been her birthplace. But, though a passage in one of her letters seems to confirm the idea of her being a native of Wales, other writers affirm that she was born in the parish of St. Mary Woolnoth, London. She was certainly baptized there on the 11th of January, 1631. Notwithstanding her initiation into the Church of England, she was educated in Presbyterian principles. These were but little calculated to engage her sympathies; and she early discarded them, and professed herself a faithful daughter of the Church into which she had been baptized.

On her marriage, in 1647, to James Philips, Esq. of the Priory, near Cardigan, she removed into Wales. There, probably, she first formed the acquaintance of Jeremy Taylor, by whom she was highly esteemed; and whose example and instruction must have strengthened her attachment to those principles, which she had of her free choice adopted. Taylor, three years before Mrs. Philips' marriage, had been present at the siege of Cardigan, where he was made prisoner; and at that time he may have

become known to her husband's family. Through his hands, it is probable, the lines addressed by Mrs. Philips to Alice Lady Carbery, on her marriage, were presented to the bride; whom she thus apostrophized:—

“ Then much above all zealous injury
 Receive this tribute of our shades from me.
 While your great splendours, like eternal spring,
 To these sad groves such a refreshment bring,
 That the despised country may be grown,
 And justly, too, the envy of the town.
 That so when all mankind at length have lost
 The virtuous grandeur which they once did boast,
 Of you, like pilgrims, they may here obtain
 Worth to recruit the dying world again.”

Those “ sad groves” was not a very happy description of the smiling landscape surrounding Lady Carbery's home. But truthful pictures of nature do not abound amongst Orinda's verses. If attempted at all, they are invested with the conventional disguise of a set of borrowed phrases. In the opening lines, however, of a poem, entitled, “ *The Reverie*,” a pretty scene is gracefully hinted:—

“ A rock which civil nature made a seat,
 A willow that repulses all the heat,
 The beauteous quiet of a summer's day,
 A brook, which sobbed aloud and ran away,
 Invited my repose, and then conspired
 To entertain my fancy thus retired.”

Her compositions all leave the impression that they were written rather to catch the ear of others, than to express those sentiments and emotions of the

writer, which in poetry only could find a fitting utterance. Her poems, however popular in her own day, certainly would not now succeed in gaining a favourable audience. Yet a modern writer has pointed out, that in her verses, "sometimes graceful, and generally musical," the pause of Pope has been anticipated. And his assertion is supported by the following examples. The first taken from the "Lines to the Countess of Carbery :"—

" And thus secured, to you who need no art
I, that speak least my wit, may speak my heart."

And, again, in the "Ode to Palæmon" occur these lines :—

" Friendship which had a scorn or mask been made,
And still had been derided or betrayed,
Or worn, not as a passion, but a plot,
At first pretended, and at last forgot."

" And what more honour can at thee be hurled
Than to protect a virtue, save a world."

But, whatever her claims to fame as a poetess may be, she must always be honourably remembered as "the most ingenious and excellent Mrs. Katherine Philips," to whom Jeremy Taylor dedicated his "Essay on Friendship." This was published in 1657, but their friendship seems to have endured the test of time, before its appearance. With Taylor's writings Mrs. Philips must long have been familiar; if, as has been plausibly conjectured, the "Treatise on Artificial Handsomeness," often attributed to him, came in truth from

her pen. For, however unworthy of the English Chrysostom the subject may be, the style is an evident imitation of his. In the preface it is stated to be the work of a lady. Some passages in it also suggest, that she was one who had been unwillingly obliged to submit a lively disposition and a taste for gay apparel to the rigid rule of Puritanism. But that Mrs. Philips would be reluctant to affix her name to it may be believed, when the surreptitious publication of her poems caused her so much chagrin as to induce a serious illness. The tract is composed in the form of a dialogue between two ladies, one an advocate, the other an opponent, of the use of rouge, which, at the time of its publication, was becoming a fashionable practice. In a frontispiece the controversialists are represented in strong contrast. The grim partizan of "beauty unadorned," stern, and plain in dress as in feature, opens the discourse not quite candidly:—"Madam, I am not more pleased to see you look so well beyond what you were wont, than I am jealous, (to be free with you) lest a person, so esteemed as you are for modesty and piety, should use some tincture or colour to adorn your complexion." After declaiming at some length against such practices, she proceeds to scare the most daring from persisting in them by adducing the fate of wicked Jezebel. For she, it seems, was justly devoured by dogs, not so much for the hand she had in Naboth's murder, as for "painting her eyes or face, as the most revered lord primate of Armagh observes in his larger catechism." The

other lady, who is represented with all the attributes of a beauty in the then prevailing mode, with lavish ringlets, patches, and a fan in her hand, defends herself with spirit and adroitness if not with much success. Why, she inquired, was she not allowed to heighten her charms by artificial aids, when full and fair *perruques* were permitted without offence to religion, and *chopines*, or high heels, were adopted by ladies of Hermia's stature?

The scorn and weariness with which the bright-eyed Orinda endured the denunciations of Puritan preachers, directed against practices which to her appeared harmless, are vividly depicted in the following words:—

“THE most of your plainer bred, and, as it were, homespun professors and preachers, who never went far beyond their own homes, can with less equal eyes behold any woman, of never so great quality, if they see or suspect her to be adorned any whit beyond the vulgar mode, or decked with feathers more gay and goodly than those birds use, which are of their own country nest. In which cases of feminine dressing and adorning no casuist is sufficient to enumerate or resolve the many intricate niceties and endless scruples of conscience, which men's and women's more plebeian zelotry makes, as about ladies' cheeks and faces, if they appear one dram or degree more quick and rosy than they were wonted, so about the length and fashion of their clothes and hair. Nor do the poor ladies (though otherwise young and handsome, or, if possibly elder, every way exemplary for modesty, gravity, and charity, yet they do not) without great gifts and presents, as by so many fines and heriots, redeem themselves from some men's severe censures;

and, if they do take any freedom to dress and set forth themselves after the best mode and fashion, it costs them as much as the Roman captain's freedom did him ; when, indeed, they are, (as St. Paul pleaded) free-born, not only in nature, but as to grace and the new-birth, which is no enemy to what fashion's modesty may bear, and which decency, civility, and custom do require."

It is rather startling to find a lady, urging her Christian liberty as a plea for the use of cosmetics. But the writer probably adapted her arguments to those used by her opponents. It is evident that she had impatiently endured the animadversions of narrow-minded critics on points, best left to be decided by individual taste and judgment ; and, by a not unnatural revulsion of feeling, she was disposed to accept and approve of opinions and practices the most opposite to theirs, as being on that account most worthy of her choice.

That the work gave much scandal on its appearance, we may gather from the mention made of it in Dr. Walker's "Life of Lady Warwick." "Though none," he says, "were farther from censuring others, or usurping judgment over their liberties, yet for herself she would never allow herself the addition of *artificial handsomeness*. She used neither paint nor patch, and was pleased with a saying of one of her spiritual friends, upon reading the book which apologises for it:—"O Lord, I thank Thee, that Thou gavest me not wit enough to write such a book, unless withal Thou hadst given me grace enough not to write it.'" That it was ever attri-

buted to Jeremy Taylor arose, perhaps, from his having revised the MS. for the author. For, though it is mentioned to her honour that her spelling was unimpeachable, yet she was sometimes puzzled as to the grammatical construction of her sentences. Thus we find her consulting Sir Charles Cotterel about a couplet in Pompey, of which Sir Edward Dering also wished to have his opinion :—

“ I know I gain another Diadem,
For which none can be blamed but Heaven and him.”

“ His objection,” observes the poetess, “ is, that *him* is scarce grammar ; he says, it should be *he* : I am not critic enough to resolve this doubt, and, therefore, leave it wholly to your determination.”

This must have been in her favour, as Sir Edward's correction was not adopted ; perhaps, because another rhyme was hard to find. Happier specimens of Mrs. Philips' powers as a prose-writer, than the defence of rouge, may be found in the collection of letters, published after her death, under the title of “ Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus : ” such were the names under which Sir Charles Cotterel and Mrs. Philips corresponded. If these letters scarcely possess sufficient merit to ensure their perusal, now that the personal interest attached to them has died away, they still furnish proofs of the graceful gifts and powers of pleasing, which won for their writer her popularity in society. They were pleasant letters to receive, and not so studied but that they may have been pleasant to

write. They are marked with good sense and ready sympathy, with here a lively episode, and there a touch of sentiment. They treat occasionally of business, sometimes of literature. A little graceful flattery is often insinuated, and less frequently some not very bitter satire. But there is nothing conversational in them. There is no chat, no flutter, no sparkle; none of those elliptical sentences that flash their full meaning on your intelligence before half is said; none of those phrases, without meaning to the multitude, that form the cypher of familiar correspondence. Orinda never appears with her hair about her ears, but is always attired with the utmost correctness.

Commencing in 1661, this correspondence was carried on until within a few weeks of her death. It relates to some of the most marked events in her life; such as her visit to Ireland with Lady Dungannon, the production on the stage of her translation of *Pompey*, and the unsanctioned publication of her poems. Of her early married life no record remains. It hardly appears to have been very happy. Her husband, under the title of *Antenor*, is, it is true, never mentioned in her letters but with all dutiful respect; nay, in some of her poems she uses language as fervent, almost, towards him, as she does to *Rosania* or *Lucasia*. Yet it is to be suspected that there was no great sympathy between the Welsh squire and the accomplished lady, who professed him to be "the guardian of her heart." And we could imagine her apostro-

phizing him, as Paolo Uccello did his wife, "Anima mia, if you could but understand the delights of perspective !"

Some secret dissatisfaction she must have owned, or she would not have so wearied herself to realize a fantastic ideal of friendship, that was not unfrequently disappointed, with Philaster and Silvanter, with Valeria and Polycrite. It was a faithful counsellor who warned her, that "marriage is the queen of friendships." Yet even he allowed, that though "a husband and wife are the best friends, they cannot always signify all that to each other that their friendships would, as the sun shines not upon a valley which sends a thick vapour to cover his face ; and though his beams are eternal, yet the emission is intercepted by the intervening cloud."

The whole of this essay, indeed, reads as though the writer with a tender hand were touching some cherished foible of the person whom he addressed, and which he would not openly indicate. Thus, when turning aside from his main subject to describe a friendship of the fancy rather than of the heart, we can imagine him glancing with good-natured satire at that "society" of friends, into which Mrs. Anne Owen, under the title of Lucia, was solemnly admitted.

"THERE is," says Taylor, "a platonic friendship as well as a platonic love ; but they, being but the images of more noble bodies, are but like tinsel dressings, which

show bravely by candlelight, and do excellently in a mask, but are not fit for conversation and the material intercourses of our life. These are the prettinesses of prosperity and good-natured wit; but when we speak of friendship, which is the best thing in the world (for it is love and beneficence, it is charity that is fitted for society,) we cannot suppose a brave pile should be built up with nothing; and they that build castles in the air and look upon friendship as upon a fine romance, a thing that pleases the fancy, but is good for nothing else, will do well when they are asleep, or when they are come to Elysium; and, for ought I know, in the mean time may be as much in love with Mandana in the Grand Cyrus, as with the Infanta of Spain or any of the most perfect beauties and real excellencies of the world: and by dreaming of perfect and abstracted friendships, make them so immaterial that they perish in the handling, and become good for nothing."

Had these words of soberness and truth been attended to, Rosania's "Apostacy" would not have been so bitterly bewailed, nor need Lady Dunganon's marriage have proved "the grave of friendship" between her and Mrs. Philips. It has been suggested, that in a succeeding paragraph Taylor referred to the pleasure which he had himself derived from the sparkling conversation and engaging manners of the lady, to whom his admonitions were addressed; and that it was of her he was speaking when he said:—"I will love a worthy friend that can delight me as well as profit me, rather than him who cannot delight me at all, and profit me no more; but yet I will not weigh the gayest flowers or the wings of butterflies against

wheat; but when I am to choose wheat, I may take that which looks the brightest."

Refreshing as intercourse with such a mind as Taylor's must have been to her also, no trace of their intimacy appears in her correspondence or other works. Palæmon, whose "incomparable Discourse on Friendship" she extols, was not Taylor, but Francis Finch, the younger brother of Heneage, Earl of Nottingham, an accomplished young Templar, whose verses were set to music by "the priest of Phœbus' quire"—Henry Lawes. Perhaps the discourse, so lauded by the lady, may have called forth Taylor's eloquent vindication of the virtue which it extolled.

Mrs. Philips, whom he declared to be "so eminent in friendships," was certainly abundant in them. Most of her poems turn upon this theme. The joys of meeting and the pains of parting, a glance misinterpreted by one lady, or a coldly worded letter of another; these rouse her to rapture, or subdue her to sadness; but do not excite much interest in readers to whom the author is a stranger. Had she chosen her subjects more happily, and bestowed more labour on her compositions, she might longer have retained the favour which in her lifetime she won, and she would certainly have better merited it.

But, though she had a cultivated mind, and a decided turn for literary pursuits, it cannot be doubted that her social qualities were those which procured her the popularity which she enjoyed. Her per-

sonal appearance does not seem to have been greatly in her favour; though Aubrey has depicted her as a blooming, comely matron; and Cowley has commemorated her "forehead smooth" and "sparkling eyes." But Anne Killigrew emphatically declared, that she—

"Owed not her glory to a beauteous face."

Ready sympathies, however, and gentle flatteries she had always at command; and these enter largely into the elements of success in such a career as hers. Patrons and poets alike vied in her praises; but, if she had not been "commended by the Earls of Orrery and Roscommon, by Cowley and other eminent poets," it may be questioned whether it would have occurred to the critics to compare her to "the Lesbian Sappho, and the Roman Sulpicia." She was fortunate in her patrons; being favourably regarded by several distinguished persons. The Duchess of York "commanded" her verses; and a copy of her translation of Pompey was presented to the King by her valued and steady friend Sir Charles Cotterel. Sir Charles was himself an author, and a very accomplished person. He had translated D'Avila, and undertaken the stupendous task of rendering the romance of Cassandra into English, besides translating many minor pieces both in Italian and Spanish. He was Mrs. Philips' instructor in Italian, and in that language any passages of his letters to her which he did not care to have made public, were written. She, for her part, carried

on the confidential part of her correspondence in French.

Gratifying as the homage which was paid her could not have failed of being, Orinda contrived amidst it all to preserve her sound good sense, and a modest appreciation, we could almost term it a depreciation of her own powers. And, undoubtedly, the qualities of her heart were to her a more precious possession than her intellectual gifts. "The virtuous Mrs. Philips" Evelyn emphatically designates her. Others have dilated on her charity, her kindness to all in distress, and the generosity of her disposition. Jeremy Taylor added the praise of excellence to the title of "ingenious," which he bestowed upon her. Above all, she was guarded by a spell, which enabled her to gaze undazzled on the glitter of flattery, and to drink unmoved of the cup of praise. "*D'abord je suis femme, et puis je suis artiste,*" is as truly the condition under which a woman must attain to distinction in literature as in art. Household duties and homely claims cannot in her case be laid aside and forgotten, amidst the calm pleasures of study, or the excitement of fame and success. So with Orinda, the busy flies of domestic anxieties corrupted with their unavoidable presence the sweetly perfumed incense of praise, offered up to her genius. A more than usual proportion of care was hers. Her husband's affairs were deeply embarrassed; and upon her devolved the task of endeavouring their adjustment. In this she was fortunate in securing the assistance of Sir

Charles Cotterel. But, in addition to her pecuniary difficulties, she was severely tried by the retirement of her life in Wales, amidst the wild moors of Cardiganshire. Letters from London might reach her there in six days, but, in consequence of the deficiency of postal arrangements, they were often as many weeks in arriving. Persons, anxious for the due delivery of their letters, used to send them by a special messenger. This remoteness from the metropolis, and banishment from society in which she was so well fitted to shine, served greatly to depress the poetess, and produced a sense of distrust in her own powers, which was sufficiently painful. At times she felt and owned herself unfit for anything but to converse with the rocks and mountains, where Fate had allotted her abode. And she was conscious of a dulness growing upon her, which she attributed to the uneasinesses of her fortune, and to the employments of a country life, removed from all conversation that could refine her wit. The scenery surrounding her home increased her melancholy. Thus she described it, comparing to it the country around Lord Dungannon's residence in Ireland:—"The country hereabouts is very like Wales; I mean, the most barren parts of it, that are hilly, and near the sea. There is very little wood, and the prospect not in the least pleasant."

" But we by Fancy may assuage
The festering wounds by Fancy made."

Yet bitterer trials befel this amiable and gifted

woman. Her only son she lost as an infant, and, if the verses in which she bewailed his death seem hardly equal to the occasion, she has herself furnished her own excuse when she says, that—

“ ——— sorrow is no Muse, and does confess
That it least can, what it would most express.”

She left one daughter, who, surviving her, afterwards married a gentleman in Pembrokeshire. Some lines, however, in memory of “ F. P. who died at Acton, in 1660, at the age of twelve years and a half,” either imply that she had another daughter, born in the year succeeding her marriage, (an idea which the verses on her son “ Little Hector Philips” seem to contradict,) or that she had adopted a girl of great promise, for whom she mourned, as though she had been her own child. Thus she laments:—

“ Alas! in vain, in vain on thee I rave;
There is no pity in the stupid grave.
But so the bankrupt, sitting on the brim
Of those fierce billows which had ruined him,
Begs for his lost estate, and does complain
To the inexorable floods in vain;
As well we may enquire when roses die,
To what retirement their sweet odours fly;
Whither their virtues and their blushes haste,
When the short triumph of their life is past;
Or call their perishing beauties back with tears,
As add one moment to thy finished years.”

It was at the close of the year in which this bereavement occurred, and whilst still at Acton, that

Mrs. Philips commenced her correspondence with Sir Charles Cotterel. It was continued on her return to Wales, when she entered upon the arduous and rather dangerous office of *confidante* to Sir Charles in a hopeless passion, which he entertained for a lady who was her neighbour in Wales. The names, however, of Calanthe and Lucasia are so inextricably perplexed in the course of the correspondence, that it is difficult to know to which of the two his court was paid; or whether, indeed, they do not both refer to the same person. Lucasia was the name assumed by Mrs. Anne Owen, the widow of the son and heir of Sir John Owen of Orielton. In the spring of 1662 she became the wife of Mark Trevor, Lord Dungannon; a marriage as little pleasing to Orinda as it was to her friend. Thus she condoled with him upon his disappointment. After having described the marriage hurried on, the dismay which it occasioned her, and the intended journey of the bride to Ireland, she proceeds:—

“ I NEVER wished myself so much a philosopher as now, that I might be in a temper sedate enough to say anything that might in some measure alleviate your griefs. But, indeed, Poliarchus, I am so afflicted myself, that 'twould be in vain for me to offer at the comfort of another. As for your share in this loss, I hope you prepared yourself much better to receive it, than I did to suffer mine.

‘ Sono ben altri infelici nell’ amore.’

And I know you are too wise to need any consolation

from any but yourself, and that you had laid in a stock of patience beforehand. Had I done so, too, I had saved myself much disquiet. Yet, when I reflect that all our regret in this case, is in vain, I begin to be a little satisfied, and often repeat to myself these words of Dr. Hammond, 'When will you begin to trust God, and permit Him to govern the world?'

"You have allowed my loss to be greater than your own, and, therefore, I will expect that consolation from you that I am unable to give myself or you, any other way than by putting you in mind, that I am much more unfortunate than you. As for Lucasia, why should we be more concerned for her than she is for herself, or than her nearest relations? I am now taught by experience, that 'tis a very thankless office, to have too much regard for the interest of our friends, when they themselves have a mind to wave it; and we must say of this as of other providences,

'Che le cose del Ciel sol colui vede,
Chi serra gli Occhi, e crede.'

Let us do so on this account, and believe that so sweet a creature cannot be injured by any thing that has the least sense of humanity; nor so much piety as hers be forsaken by the Divine Providence. May she ever be as happy, as I am otherwise, and as free from all troubles and grief, as she soon will be from the sight of mine. I can say no more, my time is so little, and my grief so great; but, whithersoever that transports me even to the grave, I beseech you get the victory over yours, and be assured that I am to my last gasp, &c.

"ORINDA.

"Landshipping, May 17, 1662."

Her friend's marriage, which she thus deplored, proved in effect a most fortunate circumstance, as she was invited to accompany her to Ireland, where

her presence was requisite in carrying on an important law-suit, connected with some of her husband's entangled affairs. But, beyond this, her visit to Dublin was fraught with consequences she little anticipated, being the means of establishing her name and place as an author. Whilst in Dublin she was introduced to Lord Orrery, himself the author of "*Parthenissa*," the first romance ever written in English. His "agreeable conversation, and great parts," excited her admiration, which he returned by abundant civility. A translation, which she had made of one of the scenes from *Corneille's "Pompey,"* falling into his hands, he was so much pleased with it, as to send her a copy of the original, with an entreaty that she would complete what she had so well begun. She complied so far as to finish the third act, which she sent to him. For this he returned thanks in a copy of stiff verses, in which, amongst other egregious compliments, he declared:—

" You english *Corneille's Pompey* with such flame,
That you both raise our wonder, and his fame ;
If he could read it, he like us would call
The copy greater than the original.
You cannot mend what is already done,
Unless you'll finish what you have begun."

Thus encouraged, what could the lady do, but proceed with her work? But it was not without many misgivings. For, in addition to all that her natural diffidence might suggest, a translation of the same play was at that time in progress, from which great

things were expected, as Waller, Buckhurst, Sedley, and Sir Edward Filmore, were all engaged upon it. Notwithstanding, she proceeded with such diligence, that in less than two months she was able to send a copy to Sir Charles Cotterel, whose verdict upon it she awaited with much trepidation. "I long to hear your opinion of it," she wrote, "for I fear that I have murdered him more barbarously here, than Achillas did in Egypt; and that my Lord Orrery's commands to me have proved no less fatal to him than the orders that Ptolemy gave to that assassin."

That the judgment of so partial a critic should have been entirely favourable can hardly be doubted; and copies of the tragedy were accordingly circulated amongst the translator's friends. A dedication offered it to the Countess of Cork, and the Duchess of York was graciously pleased to accept the copy, presented to her by Sir Charles Cotterel. And now, the autumn being far advanced, Mrs. Philips had resolved on returning home. Not even a storm, she said, should longer keep her from Antenor and her duty. Lucasia's coldness troubled her. "*Il n'y a point d'éternelles amours*," she complained; so there was the less to detain her where she was. But a brilliant idea had seized Lord Orrery. Pompey should be acted on the Dublin stage. The wits, who had clubbed together in the composition of the rival version, would not permit justice to be done to it in London. In Dublin it had already met with favour and distinguished

patronage. The Duke of Ormond and his Duchess favourably regarded the author. Lord Roscommon, "the most hopeful young nobleman in Ireland," was numbered amongst her admirers. At her request he had translated a scene in the "Pastor Fido," better than Sir Richard Fanshaw himself. And now he offered his services to supply the prologue to her play, whilst Sir Edward Dering promised to furnish the epilogue. The songs introduced between the acts were set to music by fashionable composers, and were sung by fine ladies. Lord Orrery supplied dresses for the actors, spending, as we are with emphasis informed, more than a hundred pounds on Roman and Egyptian habits. There was "an antick dance of gypsies" at the close of the first act, and a song, in which Orinda cannot be acquitted of having accommodated her sentiments to the character and tastes of the monarch then occupying the throne of England, at least as much as to those of the Egyptian ruler.

All these circumstances combined to procure for the tragedy a complete success. But a hiatus, occurring in Mrs. Philips' correspondence at this time, prevents our learning with what feelings she regarded her triumph; except that incidentally she mentions, that the flattery of the complimentary epistles with which she was overwhelmed was so excessive, that it prevented her forwarding them to Sir Charles Cotterel. On hearing from him of some fine speeches of Waller on this occasion, she observed composedly, that, doubtless, Mr. Waller

was treating her as he did the Duchess of Newcastle ; referring to his double-edged compliment to her Grace ; and adding, that she expected he would thus explain all the commendations he had lavished upon herself.

One episode of her Irish visit, for which we would willingly exchange all the details relating to the production of " Pompey," is never mentioned in her correspondence, though alluded to by her biographers. Once more it was her privilege to enjoy the society of Jeremy Taylor, now advanced to the see of Down and Connor. Thus meeting her again in the flush of success and the sunshine of flattery, he may have warned her, that " it is a thousand pities to see a diligent and hopeful person spend himself in gathering cockle-shells and little pebbles, in telling sands on the shore, and making garlands of useless daisies." At all events, she returned to her home and its duties, unmoved by the homage she had received ; though not a little regretting the society which she quitted. Many a plan she formed with Lady Cork and Sir Charles Cotterel, by which she should be enabled, the following year, to rejoin in London some of those from whom she was now parted.

It is singular that, after having endured the ordeal of seeing " Pompey" produced openly on the stage, she should have felt so acutely the surreptitious publication of her poems in the course of the ensuing year. The vehemence with which she expresses herself in the letter, addressed to Sir Charles

Cotterel in order that it might be published in her defence, is in curious contrast to the sentiments of the present day.

"Is there no retreat," exclaims Orinda, "that can shield me from the malice of this world? I thought that rocks and mountains might have hidden me; that 'twas free for all to beguile their solitude with what harmless thoughts they pleased; and that our rivers, though they are babbling, would not have betrayed the follies of impertinent thoughts that were produced on their banks. But I am the only unfortunate person who cannot so much as think in private, who must have all my imaginations and idle notions rifled and exposed to play the mountebanks, and dance upon the ropes to entertain the rabble, to undergo all the raillery of the wits, and all the severity of the wise, to be the sport of some that can, and derision of others that cannot, read a verse."

The excessive annoyance she manifested at this occurrence, may in part have arisen from the deep depression under which at this time she laboured. Her husband, more devoted to the interests of the public than to his own, had well-nigh ruined himself; and his health and spirits had for awhile completely given way beneath the pressure of anxieties. Mrs. Philips was indefatigable in her endeavours to extricate him from his difficulties; and she exerted herself to the utmost through the interest of her friends to obtain some appointment, which might in part release him from his cares. Yet her own cheerfulness could not be sustained beneath the undue calls made upon her strength. She spoke of herself as sunk under the weight of misfortunes. A thousand

groundless fears and apprehensions overwhelmed her. The delay of a letter caused her poignant suffering. One time it was Lady Cork's friendship that she feared to have forfeited. Then she was persuaded that she had offended Sir Charles Cotterel by intruding her private affairs too minutely upon him.

In some pathetic lines, which she adapted at this time to a favourite melody, she gave utterance to her dejection :—

“ 'Tis true our life is but a long disease,
Made up of real pain and seeming ease.
You stars! who these entangled fortunes give,
Oh! tell me why
It is so hard to die,
Yet such a task to live?

“ If with some pleasure we our griefs betray,
It costs us dearer than it can repay;
For time or fortune all things so devours,
Our hopes are crossed,
Or else the object lost,
Ere we can call it ours.”

Her trials seem to have excited the lively sympathy of her friends. Divers were the plots and plans devised by Sir Charles Cotterel and Lady Cork to enable her to rejoin them in London. Their purpose was at length accomplished in the spring of the year succeeding her return from Ireland. It was but a transient gleam of happiness that was thus afforded her. Her last letter was written in May, 1664, requesting Sir Charles Cotterel to

stand* godfather to her brother's child. Shortly afterwards, whilst staying in Fleet Street, she was seized with small-pox, of which she died, in the thirty-third year of her age. A tomb in St. Bennet's Church, where her child was already laid, received her remains, and she resigned all her real cares and shadowy triumphs for "a much different clime—"

"In the glad world of poetry and love."

An unfinished translation of "*Les Horaces*," which she had commenced during the last sad winter of her life, was completed by Sir John Denham, and acted at Court, the prologue being spoken by the Duke of Monmouth. "A silly tragedy," Pepys calls it. "Pompey" also was represented in London in 1678; and in the same year a corrected edition of her poems appeared, her letters not being given to the world until some years later. Meanwhile her fame rose still higher than during her lifetime. Cowley extolled her virtues and bewailed her fate. Dryden, in his ode on Anne Killigrew, coupled her name with that of her sister poetess, who perished by the same "cruel disease." The accomplished maid of honour herself, also, commemorated in verse—

"Orinda, Albion's and her sex's grace."

She has long, however, taken her place amongst neglected writers; though Dr. Johnson thought her censure of Waller's double rhymes worth repeating.

But she found her last admirer, perhaps, in Roscoe, who, when a boy, classed Mrs. Philips' Poems with the works which he most delighted in reading—Shakespeare, Shenstone, and the Spectator. In such a goodly company we may well be content to leave her.

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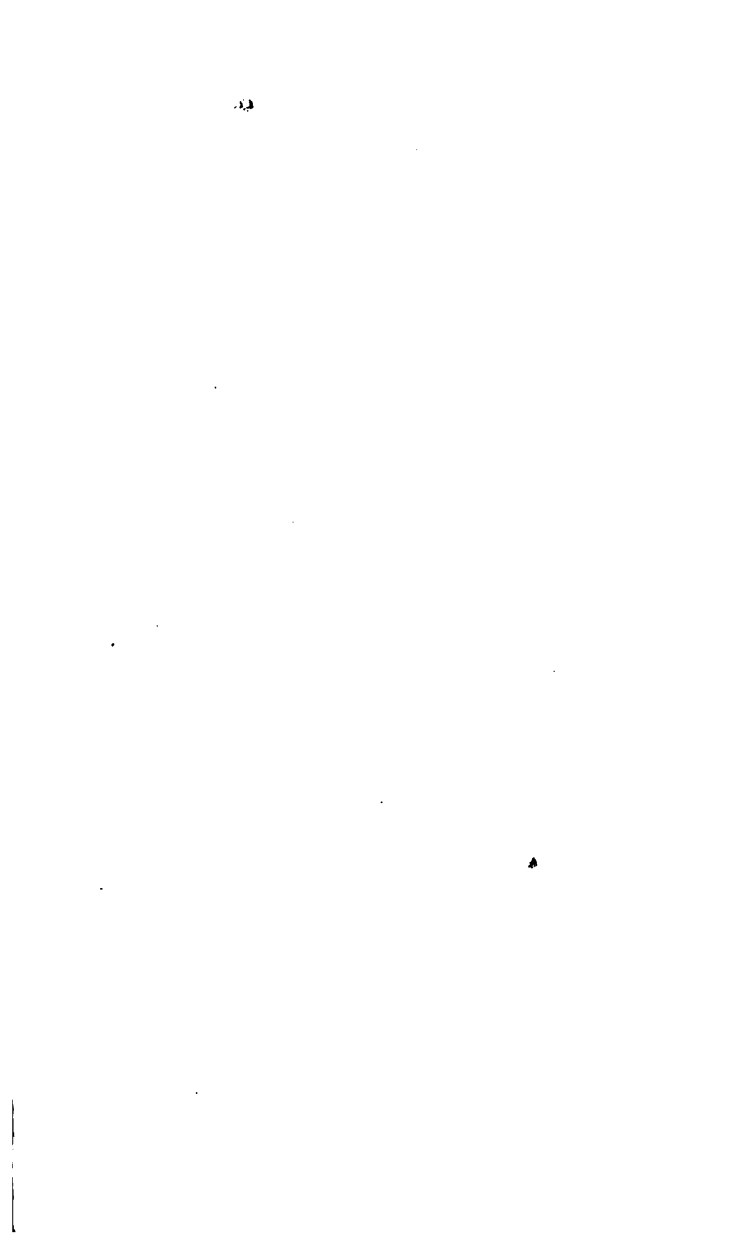
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